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Saddam offers dialogue with Kurds

BAGHDAD (AFP) — President Saddam Hussein on Monday offered to reopen a dialogue with warring Kurdish opposition groups in a bid to halt an upsurge of fighting in northern Iraq. The offer, issued after an Iraqi cabinet meeting chaired by President Saddam, was the first since talks between Baghdad and the Kurds were broken off three years ago. A cabinet statement read out on Baghdad Radio said: "The Iraqi leadership is still ready to enter a new initiative for dialogue and its main option remains the search for a peaceful solution to reestablish order and security in the region of autonomous Kurdistan." The Kurdish opposition "must draw its conclusions from the experiences of the last few years and opt for choices which serve the national unity of Iraq," it added. Fierce fighting between the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan (PUK) and the Kurdistan Democratic Party (KDP) has left between 100 and 500 people dead since Dec. 24, according to Kurdish officials (see page 2). Long-standing negotiations between Baghdad and the Kurds on extending autonomy for northern Iraq collapsed three years ago, before the Kurds erected their own "parliament" and formed a PUK-KDP government in May 1992.

Prince Ghazi attends talks on education

AMMAN (Petra) — His Royal Highness Prince Ghazi Ben Mohammad, the King's cultural advisor, Monday attended a meeting of the Higher Education Council held at the Ministry of Education under the chairmanship of Higher Education Minister Rateb Al Saoud. The council approved, among other decisions, a request by the presidents of the five government universities to distribute allocations among them equally.

Israeli kills Palestinian

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM (AFP) — An Israeli school guard mistook two Palestinian workers for assailants on Monday and opened fire, killing one man and wounding the other, police said. The men were about to unload goods from a truck parked nearby when the guard shot them, one in the head and the other in the back. Abdul Karim Mohammad Julani, 24, from the Shwafat refugee camp in Jerusalem, later died from his head injuries, Palestinian sources said. The guard, posted by the school gates, told police he thought the Palestinians were "terrorists" who were about to "attack" the school in west Jerusalem.

Israeli soldier found dead

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM (AFP) — An Israeli soldier was found dead Sunday in a forest near the occupied West Bank town of Jenin, an army spokesman said. The 38-year-old sergeant had been tied up and his weapon was discovered near his body, the spokesman said. The army and the police have launched an inquiry into the death, he added without giving further details. The Israeli news agency Itim, quoting Palestinian sources, said the officer's body bore marks of violence.

Palestinian police number 15,000

GAZA CITY (AFP) — The Palestinian police force has grown to number 15,000 men, or 6,000 more than the autonomy agreements allow, the U.N. special coordinator in Gaza said Monday. "We are not allowed to disburse money to more than 9,000 policemen as defined in the Cairo agreement," which launched autonomy in the Strip and West Bank town of Jericho last May, said United Nations representative Terje Larsen. "According to information we have received from the Palestinian police there are now 15,000 policemen and security officers in Gaza and Jericho." Larsen told reporters that if thousands of policemen were not being paid "there will be a very bad security situation."

13 Jews barred from Haram Al Sharif

TEL AVIV (AFP) — Police arrested 13 Jewish extremists on Monday as they tried to break into the Haram Al Sharif complex in Jerusalem's walled city, the authorities said. The group led by Yehuda Harel, who was jailed in the 1980s for his role in a Jewish underground movement which killed several Palestinians, demanded the right to pray on the site.

Police search Palestinian agency

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM (AFP) — Israeli police on Monday searched the buildings of the Palestinian press agency Al Quds in Jerusalem looking for evidence that it was being used by the hardline Hamas group, police said. "Our men confiscated a large number of documents and suspect this agency is serving as a propaganda centre for Hamas," a police spokesman told AFP. He said Hamas had been using the agency to send out information on attacks carried out by its members as well as leaflets.

Arafat, Kabariti agree Jerusalem should not be cause for disunity

Foreign minister explains Jordan's position ahead of Jerusalem Committee meetings

By a Jordan Times Staff Reporter

PALESTINIAN leader Yasser Arafat and Foreign Minister Abdul Karim Kabariti on Monday held talks on the controversy over Jerusalem and Mr. Kabariti briefed Mr. Arafat on Jordan's effort to preserve the Arab and Islamic character of the Holy City until it is restored to Palestinian sovereignty, news reports said.

Mr. Arafat, chairman of the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO), and president of the Palestine National Authority (PNA), confirmed to Mr. Kabariti that he would visit Jordan for talks with His Majesty King Hussein in the last week of January, the Jordan News Agency, Petra, said.

The meeting in the Moroccan city of Fez came shortly before the Jerusalem Committee of the Organisation of Islamic Conference (OIC) opened a two-day meeting chaired by King Hassan II of Morocco.

Petra said Mr. Kabariti discussed with Mr. Arafat issues on the meetings' agenda and the foreign minister explained to the Palestinian leader that Jordan's position on Jerusalem "aims at preserving the city's Arab and Islamic character and safeguarding it until it is restored to Palestinian sovereignty."

The agency said Mr. Arafat and Mr. Kabariti "underlined the importance of keeping Jerusalem as a unifying factor and to avoid having it as a cause of disunity and disputes."

The PNA president and the foreign minister also discussed "Jordanian-Palestinian relations and means to bolster the ties, particularly during meeting which will be held in Amman soon between the two sides" Petra said.

The talks were attended by Farouk Kaddoumi, head of the Political Department of the PLO, and members of the Jordanian and Palestinian delegation to the OIC meeting, which is expected to discuss the latest developments related to Jerusalem and Israeli moves aimed at consolidating its grip on the Arab Eastern sector of the holy city.

The status of Jerusalem emerged as a point of controversy between the PLO and Jordan after Israel recognised the Kingdom's historic role as the custodian of the Islamic shrines in the Holy City. The PLO refused to accept Jordan's explanation and reaffirmation that its role in the Holy City was strictly religious and that the Kingdom fully supported the Palestinians' quest for political sovereignty over the city.

During an OIC summit in Casablanca, Morocco, in December, the PLO, supported by some Arab states including Saudi Arabia and Egypt, managed to exclude any reference to Jordan in a final resolution but included a reference to a Saudi prince's financial aid to Jerusalem.

Jordan, which has been paying for the upkeep of the shrines in Jerusalem for decades, said it had no quarrel

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His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan on Monday meets with a delegation representing the Association of Reform Zionists of America (Petra photo)

Crown Prince urges dialogue among monotheistic religions

Prince, in talks with team of reformed Zionists, calls for focus on similarities

AMMAN (J.T.) — His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan on Monday called for inter-faith dialogue of the three monotheistic religions and for a common ground to be found between the monotheistic values.

At a meeting with the president and members of the Association of Reformed Zionists of America at the Higher Council for Science and Technology (HCST), Prince Hassan underlined the significance of the in-house dialogue of religions in countering bias and extremism.

He said it was time to contain differences resulting from ideological backgrounds and called for opening a new chapter of interfaith dialogue in the United States.

He also said the followers of the three monotheistic religions should work to end all sorts of extremism and stressed the need to bring to an end acts of violence targetting Muslims in various parts of the world, noting that the followers of monotheistic religions have a common interest in stopping aggressions against Muslims.

The Crown Prince underlined the need for having values common to the monotheistic religions to be based on the principle of dialogue and the establishment of similarities rather than differences to pave the way for bringing these religions closer to form one joint ground of understanding, cooperation and integration among the world's nations.

He also voiced hope such an institutional dialogue would include the U.S., pointing out that there was already a trilateral institutional dialogue that started in the Vatican, Switzerland and Britain.

His Royal Highness also stressed the need to base peace in the Middle East on material guarantees that would reflect positively on the lives of peoples in the region.

He also urged journalists all over the world to meet in the Middle East and to be familiarised with conditions prevailing in the region so that they would be able to remove bias and prejudice against Muslims and Arabs.

Head of the association Ammil Hirsch reiterated the Prince's call for inter-faith dialogue and noted that negotiators had now reached a peace treaty between Jordan and Israel and it was time for deeper dialogue among the peoples.

Members of the delegation, which arrived in Amman on Monday, were briefed by HCST Secretary General and Royal Scientific Society President Hani Mulki on the council's achievements and future plans.

They were also briefed by Prince Hassan's advisor Awn Al Khasawneh on the Middle East peace process, Jordan's role in it and the Kingdom's achievements.

Another advisor of the Crown Prince, Ahmad Mango, outlined the economic situation in Jordan as compared to others in the region and Europe.

Parliament assails Gingrich comment

AMMAN (J.T.) — The Lower House of Parliament on Monday slammed a call from the new speaker of the U.S. House of Representatives, Newt Gingrich, for the transfer of the U.S. embassy in Israel from Tel Aviv to occupied Jerusalem. "Gingrich's remarks come at an inappropriate time and are bound to negatively affect the parties concerned in the conflict," said the Lower House's 23-member Foreign Affairs Committee.

The statement said Mr. Gingrich's demands were "detrimental, especially that they were made by the leader of the majority party in Congress — the Republican Party, which was in power when the principles of the Madrid peace conference, which launched the peace process, were approved.

"These principles" the committee's statement continued, "do not allow discussing the issue of Jerusalem before the start of the final phase of the peace negotiations."

"The Lower House of Parliament believes that such statements, which were issued improperly in terms of subject, timing and source, would infuriate Muslims and Arabs around the World," the statement said.

Mr. Gingrich said on Israel Television on Sunday he strongly favoured moving the U.S. embassy in Israel to occupied Jerusalem.

"I strongly favour moving the American embassy. I think it is absurd for us to

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Saudi-Yemeni tension defused

PARIS (Agencies) — Yemeni President Ali Abdullah Saleh said here Monday he was "satisfied" with an agreement to end tension on his country's disputed borded with Saudi Arabia and that his country would not go to war with its neighbour.

Yemen and Saudi Arabia announced the agreement late Sunday pledging to avoid the use of force on the border, where their forces have clashed several times since early December.

Tension increased over the weekend when the two neighbours in the Arabian Peninsula were reported to be massing troops near the border.

Mr. Saleh, who arrived in Paris on Sunday for his first official visit for four years, told reporters he had briefed French President Francois Mitterrand on the accord during a lunchtime meeting.

He was "satisfied" with the deal.

In an interview with Radio France Internationale, Mr. Saleh blamed the latest crisis on "elements within the border guards who receive salaries from Yemen and Saudi Arabia, and who raised the Saudi flag on Yemeni sites."

Mr. Saleh also indicated he could visit Saudi Arabia to settle the border dispute.

But Mr. Saleh said such a trip would require careful preparation.

"It must be well prepared in order to be useful," he told reporters after holding talks over lunch with President

(Continued on page 7)

Moscow offers talks with Chechens

MOSCOW (Agencies) — Russian Prime Minister Viktor Chernomyrdin on Monday proposed a ceasefire and immediate negotiations with Chechen secessionists, but under tough terms unlikely to be accepted by the Chechens.

In a statement on Ostankino Television, he said: "The start of negotiations will mean at the same time a ceasefire."

But, despite making his first overture to the rebels since Russian President Boris Yeltsin charged him at the start of the month with opening negotiations, he then proceeded to lay down a series of tough conditions, insisting peace could only come after the Chechens had laid down their arms.

Mr. Chernomyrdin expressed the hope that "this fresh move addressed to the conscience and reason of the illegal armed groups' leaders will this time find a reply." Illegal armed groups is shorthand for Chechen secessionists.

"Our main objectives today is to stop the bloodletting," he said.

He offered to hold talks on freezing troop deployments in Chechenya and calling off "the use of artillery, tanks and other heavy weapons."

Negotiations should also be held on setting up "non-fighting zones" where weapons could be stockpiled, he said.

Russia has repeatedly called for the disarming of Chechen forces, but with the Chechens categorically refusing to budge on the issue, the call has become a sticking point between the two sides.

In addition, the premier called for wide-ranging talks on Chechenya's future with a view to setting up a transitional government.

But finding a leader acceptable to both sides is also likely to prove an almost impossible task.

Opposition leaders Umar Avturkhanov and Beslan Gantemirov, backed by Moscow, are for that very reason likely to meet with rejection in the wake of the Russian military intervention, while the head of the Russian-installed "government of national renaissance," Salambek Khadyev, said Monday he wanted a referendum.

However, the Russian constitution does not allow for that solution among any of its federation "subjects," and Moscow would fight tooth and nail any pro-independence vote.

Mr. Chernomyrdin said that early, free elections would allow the Chechens to choose their own leaders, saying then would be the time to discuss Chechenya's status inside Russia and the distribution of power between Moscow and the republics.

Russian artillery and mortar units meanwhile pounded Grozny and troops clashed with Chechen fighters in the streets.

Russian rescue teams were also reported heading for the

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Central Bank warns of 20-dinar counterfeit

By P.V. Vivekanand
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — The Central Bank of Jordan (CBJ) said Monday it had discovered counterfeit 20-dinar notes in circulation and called on the public to report to the authorities if they came across such notes.

The most distinct difference between the forged and the authentic notes is that the counterfeit bills are bigger in size and printed on soft-texture ordinary paper instead of regular currency paper, said a CBJ statement carried by the Jordan News Agency, Petra.

Another feature of the forgery is a slight discolouring of the photograph of His Majesty King Hussein, said the CBJ statement.

"Investigations are under way to unveil those responsible" for the forgery, said the statement without elaboration.

It called on the public to cooperate with the authorities by reporting the forgeries as and when found.

It is one of the rare cases of forgeries of Jordanian currency in decades.

The first indication is that the volume of the new forgery could be limited, given that moneychangers said they had not come across any of the reported counterfeit bills and that they were surprised to hear the CBJ announcement.

An official at the Kabariti exchange company, whose owner Mutie Kabariti chairs the Association of Jordanian Moneychangers, said: "We have not come across any forgeries and we have not been informed by anyone of the existence of the counterfeit."

The official recalled that the authorities had discovered counterfeit 20-dinar notes in 1988-89 and that was one of the reasons the CBJ had replaced the old bills with new notes. It was the third issue of 20-dinar banknotes.

Reports at that time said the forgeries had surfaced in a Swiss bank and were traced to the then Israeli-occupied Gaza Strip, where, along with the occupied West Bank, the Jordanian dinar is the main currency in circulation.

The reports had suggested that Israel, then in a state of war with Jordan, might be trying economic sabotage by releasing counterfeit currency of the Kingdom in the occupied territories. However, no conclusive indication was reported as to who was behind the scam.

Total Jordanian currency in circulation stood at JD1,128.6 million at the end of October 1994, according to the monthly statistical bulletin of the Central Bank.

The bulletin showed that JD9.8 million of the currency in circulation were in coins, and JD973 million, or 87 per cent of all banknotes in circulation, were in 20-dinar bills, JD96.5 million, or 8.6 per cent, in 10-dinar bills, JD28.6 million, or 2.6 per cent, in five-dinar bills, JD15.9 million, or 1.4 per cent, in one-dinar bills, JD4.8 million, or 0.4 per cent, in half-dinar bills.

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Mubarak wins all-party support in nuclear dispute

CAIRO (AFP) — Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak has for the first time in a long while succeeded in rallying political opponents behind him in a campaign against Israel's refusal to sign the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty.

All the opposition papers whether right-wing, left-wing or pro-Islamic have paid tribute to the Egyptian president for his stance over the issue, putting aside their usual jibes and criticisms.

"He knows that the main Egyptian opposition parties support his position on national issues including the elimination of the Israeli nuclear strength," the mouthpiece of the Labour Party, Al Shaab wrote, despite criticising the continued detention of the party's secretary general, Adel Hussein.

Mustafa Bakri, the editor-in-chief of the Liberal Party's Al Ahrar newspaper who has been in trouble with the state prosecutor since October for his articles, went even further.

"The attitude of President Mubarak confirms that Egypt which plays a pivotal role in the region will never accept the (Israeli) humiliation which the Arab Nation has been a victim of," he wrote Friday.

Even the banned Muslim Brotherhood which has seen several members arrested in the past few months backed Mr. Mubarak's stance.

"We are encouraged by this decision and call on the president to go further in working for the elimination of Israeli arms of mass destruction," Brotherhood spokesman Maamun Al Hodeiby told AFP.

Mr. Mubarak announced that Egypt will refuse to resign the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty which is due for renewal in April if Israel does not join.

But Israel, which has never confirmed or denied Western estimates that it has around 100 nuclear warheads, has said signing the treaty will not lead to stability in the region or an efficient control of nuclear programmes.

U.S. Defence Secretary William Perry urged Israel to back an extension of the treaty in talks with Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin on Jan. 8 in Tel Aviv, after first raising the issue with Mr. Mubarak in Cairo.

"Whatever differences we have with the ruling power we salute this position which serves the interests of the country," Mr. Hodeiby added.

A member of the Nasserist Party politburo Hossam Eissa also welcomed the stance as "a very good initiative and we hope to see it continue." The party is vehemently opposed to any Arab-Israeli reconciliation.

But Mr. Eissa also urged Egypt to "arm itself with nuclear weapons unless Israel's nuclear strength is eliminated.

Mr. Mubarak also won the backing of the main right-wing opposition New Wafd, but one of its leaders Yassin Serageddin urged Egypt to match Israel's nuclear strength.

Israel has always stuck to an official line since 1965 that would not be the first country to introduce nuclear weapons to the region.

Defence Minister Mohammad Hussein Tantawi said Sunday Israel's nuclear arsenal and the military imbalance it creates in the Middle East is unacceptable to Egypt.

"Israel's determination to maintain a dissuasive nuclear force under the pretext of guaranteeing its security and in spite of our commitment to peace constitutes an unacceptable strategic imbalance," Gen. Tantawi told the partiament defence committee here.

"This imbalance must be taken into account because it could lead to mistaken policies," added Gen. Tantawi, quoted by the official news agency MENA.

Gen. Tantawi also praised Iran for adopting a more flexible policy towards joint regional and international forces, but said the expansion of the Iranian armed forces and the spread of its fundamentalist ideas abroad "raises doubts about its intentions."

Egypt has accused Iran of supporting Muslim militants who launched a campaign of violence to topple Mr. Mubarak's government in March 1992.

Gen. Tantawi also condemned Iran's "continued occupation" of the islands of Greater and Lesser Tunb and Abu Mussa, claimed by the United Arab Emirates.

DEIR AL KAHF: Her Majesty Queen Noor on Monday talks to a child during a visit she paid to Deir Al Kahf in Mafraq Governorate (see story on page 3) (photo by George Crystal)

NEWS IN BRIEF

Israel names new military coordinator

TEL AVIV (AFP) — Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin on Sunday named General Oren Shahor as the new coordinator of Israeli activities in the West Bank and Gaza Strip, officials said. Gen. Shahor will replace Gen. Danny Rothschild, who recently announced his resignation from the army after having headed Israel's delegation to autonomy talks with the Palestinians. Gen. Shahor has spent most of his career in the army's intelligence services, the officials said without specifying whether he would also take part in autonomy negotiations.

UAE jails 23 for attempted gang-rape

DUBAI (R) — Twenty-three drunken youths who kidnapped and tried to gang-rape a woman in the United Arab Emirates have been sentenced to prison terms ranging from six to 10 years, newspapers reported on Monday. They said a court in the northern emirate of Umm Al Quwain sentenced 19 of the men to 10 years in jail. Four others were ordered jailed for six years and to receive 80 lashes each. The court was told the 23, aged 17 to 20, broke into a hotel in Umm Al Quwain after being refused permission to enter. They kidnapped the woman from a chalet in the hotel grounds, and after tearing off her clothes, they chased the naked and screaming woman around the gardens to the horror of residents. On hearing police sirens, they bundled the woman into one of three cars they had with them but had to throw her out of the car when a desert chase became too close. Only 10 of the youths were caught and brought to trial but all were convicted of assault, battery and kidnapping. Neither the woman nor the youths were identified in the newspaper reports.

Aden shopowners threaten general strike

ADEN (R) — Representatives of more than 10,000 shopowners in the southern Yemeni city of Aden have threatened to stage a one-day protest against a new law which they said allowed their landlords to raise rents at random. They told reporters in Aden they would strike next Saturday. They also said a general meeting of shopowners due to take place on Sunday was cancelled on the instructions of the city governor, Taha Ahmad Ghanem. They gave no reason. The meeting would have elected an executive committee and discussed a law issued by Mr. Ghanem last month to regulate the relationship between landlords and shopowners. Details of the law were not given. The representatives said that some of their rents had increased from 1,000 Yemeni rials to 10,000 ($12 to $119 at the free market rate) in less than six months. In the former Marxist South Yemen, of which Aden was the capital until it merged with North Yemen in 1990, most shops were nationalised and rents were fixed and stable. Nationalisation laws were cancelled after Yemen unified. Landlords regained ownership and were able to introduce their own rents.

Blank spaces dot pro-Kurdish daily

ANKARA (R) — Turkey's leading pro-Kurdish newspaper hit the streets on Monday dotted with blank spaces after being censored by authorities for its reporting of the Kurdish guerrilla war in the southeast of the country. Two stories on Ozgur Ulke daily's front page were blanked out, as was all of page four and an article on another page. The word "Censored" in Turkish was written over the empty spaces. An anti-terrorism court in Istanbul ordered copies of the paper seized late on Sunday under Turkey's tough legal restraints against promoting separatism, Ozgur Ulke editor Baki Karadeniz told Reuters. "Instead of letting them grab our papers, we just took out the stories they objected to and went on printing as usual. The court hasn't objected to that so far," he said. One of the censored articles was a report that Kurdish Labour Party (PKK) rebels shot down an army Sikorsky Black Hawk helicopter, which the military said crashed due to a technical fault. The Black Hawk went down in Diyarbakir province last Friday, killing all six soldiers on board.

Video airs Canada soldiers' racial slurs on Somalis

TORONTO (R) — Canadian television on Sunday showed a home video of Canadian soldiers on U.N. peacekeeping duties in Somalia describing the people they were helping there in racist and derogatory terms.

The two-hour video was shot about two years ago by members of Canada's Airborne Regiment during the United Nations famine relief mission in Somalia.

"Let's get something straight. There's no one starving here... they never work, they're lazy, they're slobs and they stink," said one unidentified soldier on the video, which was broadcast by the CBC newsworld programme "Ottawa Inside Out."

Another paratrooper, whom the CBC said was once a member of a white supremacist group and had been photographed giving a Nazi salute, laughed when asked what he thought of the tour of duty in the impoverished African country.

"I think it sucks... we ain't killed enough niggers yet," the soldier said before spitting on the parched ground.

The film was made shortly before the brutal killing of a teenage Somali at the hands of Canadian peacekeepers in March 1993.

Gruesome colour photographs showing Shidane Arone, 16, being tied up, tortured and beaten to death in a military compound in the central Somali town of Belet Huen shocked Canadians when they were published last November.

Some of the soldiers featured in the video were later charged over the beating of Arone, who died three hours after his capture from severe head injuries. Seven men were charged in the killing.

Private Kyle Brown, who took the controversial still photographs of Arone's ordeal, was convicted of manslaughter and torture last year and sentenced to five years in jail.

Private David Brocklebank is shown in the video pretending to fire his machine gun as he refers to the Somalis as "niggers."

Pvt. Brocklebank was in the bunker at the time of Arone's death but was acquitted of torture.

55 killed in fighting in northern Iraq — PUK

NICOSIA (AFP) — Fierce fighting in and around the main town in Kurdish-held northern Iraq has left about 55 people dead and 100 wounded, a local official said late Sunday.

Kosrat Rassoul, a politburo member of the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan (PUK) and the appointed "prime minister" of the Kurdish-held area, told AFP by telephone from Erbil that the rival Kurdistan Democratic Party (KDP) had been bombing the town since late Saturday.

"Blind bombing from KDP positions left 20 civilians dead and 100 wounded," he said.

He added that fighting for control of the Kaznavan hills which overlook the town where the KDP said it had achieved a breakthrough had "left close to 35 fighters dead" on both sides since Saturday.

Seven were PUK fighters and the others were from the KDP. Fifteen KDP bodies had been handed over to the Iraqi National Congress (INC) opposition alliance, Mr. Rassoul added.

KDP member and the appointed "parliamentary speaker" Jawhar Namek Salem told the London-based Saudi television station MBC that the KDP had "retaken several hills" around Erbil from their PUK rivals.

"There will be no winner in this fighting. We reject the military solution and demand political dialogue," Mr. Rassoul said. He charged that KDP leaders had refused INC calls for talks.

Kurdish officials said earlier that renewed fighting had flared for control of Erbil leaving "dozens of dead" and shattering a three-day lull.

Officials in Tehran said the KDP led by Massud Barzani had launched a new offensive on Saturday against the PUK headed by Jalal Talabani, taking control of several areas near Erbil.

In London, a PUK official earlier acknowledged the KDP had taken "some pockets" in the suburbs of Erbil, the seat of an Iraqi Kurdish "parliament," but he said the main thrust of the assault was repelled.

The KDP had left behind "dozens of dead" on the ground, Sami Shorash told the London-based Arabic newspaper Al Hayat.

"Fierce fighting is going on. Both sides have reported victims," said the Kurdistan information centre, also based in London.

Al Hayat said Mr. Barzani refused to abide by an INC-brokered ceasefire on Jan. 8 unless Mr. Talabani withdrew his forces from Erbil which they captured in late December.

Mr. Rassoul said several KDP leaders "are currently on the frontline," denying accusations that he taken part in the fighting and adding that "deputies from both sides in the Kurdish parliament still have their seats and their freedom is assured."

He said newphew of Mr. Barzani had been.

The Kurds have controlled northern Iraq in defiance of Baghdad since the aftermath of the 1991 Gulf war, with backing from the U.S.-led coalition which ousted Iraqi troops fromKuwait.

The KDP and PUK, which previously shared power, clashed many times last year in a bitter struggle for supremacy. The PUK is stronger in the southern part of the Kurdish area, while the KDP's main base is to the north near Turkey.

Most patients in Mogadishu are cross-fire victims

MOGADISHU (AFP) — At Mogadishu's Digfer Hospital, 80 per cent of the hundreds of patients with bullet wounds are civilians hit by stray fire.

They are the peripheral victims of fighting between sub-clans for control of disputed areas of south Mogadishu, the "capital" of a country which has been without a government since the overthrow of dictator Mohammad Siad Barre in January 1991.

Some at the hospital were around 1.5 kilometres away from the fighting when they were hit by a bullet out of the blue on relatively peaceful streets where bougainvillea cascades in a riot of colour over once-whitewashed walls punctured by shell-holes.

Surgeons at Digfer operate without gowns or masks in theatres with windows and doors open to the breezes blowing in from the Indian Ocean.

On the walls, blood which has dribbled down the tiles is caked now, and rust-coloured.

In the wards, their walls streaked with candle-soot, patients are cared for by relatives who sleep on mats on the floor beside them and cook their meals in the grounds, or on balconies.

Mohammad Haji Bubal, the hospital's assistant director, told AFP that 80 per cent of the 450 war-wounded in Digfer were non-combatants hit by stray fire.

Drugs, supplied by the U.N. World Health Organisation, were short, he said, and the hospital was using a generator which was overloaded because it was meant only to draw water from the hospital's well.

The International Committee of the Red Cross was in the process of repairing the main generator, he added.

Staff receive no pay, but are meant to receive food from the United Nations once a month.

"The last time they received food was five months ago," Mr. Bubal said.

He said passers-by were sometimes wounded by stray fire outside the hospital, but that since the Americans had left no one had targeted it.

After a month of on-and-off fighting between the Murusade and Abgal subclans of the Hawiye clan in the Medina and Bermuda districts of south Mogadishu which left close to 200 deal and some 700 wounded, elders agreed to a ceasefire starting Jan. 5, which effectively came into force the following day.

Fighting resumed in Bermuda Saturday.

It intensified Sunday, with hospitals and witnesses reporting at least three killed and 11 wounded over the weekend.

U.N. troops and civilians meanwhile evacuated their big compound in south Mogadishu for the airport — leaving behind a security battalion of Pakistani troops to deter looters as contractors remove equipment — preparatory to leaving Somalia by late March following the failure of rival warlords to agree to form a government of national unity.

Tale of two kings, an oil spill and a Moroccan university

By Kate Dourian
Reuter

IFRANE, Morocco — King Hassan of Morocco will inaugurate one of the world's most modern universities in this mountain resort town on Monday, but few are likely to remember in years to come that it all began with an oil spill.

It was in 1990 that an Iranian tanker spilled its cargo off the Moroccan coast. The Moroccan government, unable to bear the cost of a huge clean-up, appealed for help.

King Fahd of Saudi Arabia, the world's biggest crude oil exporter, promptly wrote a cheque for $50 million.

Then the winds changed and carried the oil out to sea.

The money stayed in the bank earning interest until King Hassan came up with the idea of building a private university funded partly with the cash and calling it Al Akhawayn, which translates from the Arabic as "the two brothers."

Journalists were taken on a tour of the university in Ifrane, the Atlas Mountain resort that is more like provincial France than Morocco, and shown the state-of-the-art structure that King Hassan hopes will attract students from around the world.

There is certainly much to tempt an impecunious student.

Housing on campus comes with breathtaking views of the Atlas mountains and their blanket of cedar trees. Each room is equipped with cable television and private telephone and there are microwave ovens in the communal kitchens.

Leisure facilities include an indoor Olympic-sized swimming pool and tennis courts to make up for the lack of other entertainment in Ifrane, 220 kilometres from the capital Rabat.

The library will eventually contain 200,000 books and the university will be hooked up to the "computer superhighway" through the Internet system. The chemistry laboratory will have a recycling plant for used chemicals.

U.S. consultants were brought in to shape Al Akhawayn into a U.S.-style university, with the difference that a mosque occupies the centre of the campus although there are plans to build a church and a synagogue in future.

Don Henry, of Nacogdoches in Texas, was sitting on his porch last August watching the squirrels and contemplating how to occupy his time in retirement when a call came asking him if he wanted a job in Morocco.

"It's a tremendous opportunity but there are pretty major differences in culture and it's really going to be kwiing," said Mr. Henry, 63.

Jan Guynes, of Arlington in Texas, says one example of the difference in approach was the decision by Morocco to host a meeting of the Organisation of Islamic Conference (OIC) Jerusalem Committee on Monday in the university library.

The start of the semester was delayed for a few days to make way for the meeting, which will be attended by Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat and foreign ministers from 14 Islamic countries.

"I don't think this has happened in any other university that I know of," Mr. Guynes said.

The university is the only one in Morocco where English will be the language of instruction, although all students regardless of nationality will have to take an Arabic language course.

Izzedine Al Iraqi, president of the university's board of trustees and a former Moroccan prime minister, says he hopes the university will contribute to a better understanding of Arabs and Islam.

"It is a Moroccan university, but we also want it to have an international character and to help to remove incomprehensions which exist on a cultural and religious level. That is why we insist that Arabic be taught...because it is through learning Arabic that we can make Islam understood," he said.

JORDAN TELEVISION

Tel: 773111-19

PROGRAMME TWO
17:00 ... "Cocottes Minutes"
17:30 ... Que Le Meilleur Gagne
18:00 ... Embarquement Porte 1
18:30 Le Monde Fantastique Des Enfants
19:00 ... News in French
19:30 Practical Guide to the Universe
19:45 ... Varities
20:00 ... The Detectives
20:30 ... Quantum Leap
21:10 ... Equinox
22:00 ... News in English
22:20 ... Wild Palms
23:10 ... Flair

PRAYER TIMES

05:10 ... Fajr
06:32 ... *(Sunrise) Duha*
11:45 ... Dhuhr
14:34 ... 'Asr
16:58 ... Maghreb
18:20 ... 'Isha

CHURCHES

St. Mary of Nazareth Church Sweifieh, Tel. 810740
Assemblies of God Church, Tel. 632785.
St. Joseph Church Tel. 624590.
Church of the Annunciation Tel. 637440.
De la Salle Church Tel. 661757
Terra Sancta Church Tel: 622366
Church of the Annunciation Tel. 623541.
Anglican Church Tel. 630851. Tel. 628543.
Armenian Catholic Church Tel. 771331.
Armenian Orthodox Church Tel. 775261.
St. Ephraim Church Tel. 771751.
Amman International Church Tel. 652526.
Evangelical Lutheran Church Tel: 624328.
German-speaking Evangelical Congregation Tel. 684195
The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints Tel. 654932
Church of Nazarene Tel.675691.
The Evangelical Local Church In Amman
Tel. 811295.

WEATHER

Bulletin supplied by the Department of Meteorology.

A cold air front will affect the Kingdom, thus rainfall is expected in different regions with temperatures dropping significantly and winds becoming westerly active. In Aqaba, winds will be northerly active and seas rough.

Min./Max. temp.
Amman ... 3/16
Aqaba ... 8 / 16
Deserts ... 1/8
Jordan Valley ... 7 / 15

Yesterday's high temperatures: Amman 8, Aqaba 17. Humidity readings: Amman 26 per cent, Aqaba 30 per cent.

USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS

NIGHT DUTY

AMMAN:
Dr. Ghaleb Zawaideh ... 736011
Dr. Fakher Belbeisi ... 663412
Dr. Yousef Nasr ... 751144
Dr. Khaldoun Asfour ... 666873
Firas pharmacy ... 661912
Ferdows pharmacy ... 778336
Al Asema pharmacy ... 637055
Nairoukh pharmacy ... 623672
Al Salam pharmacy ... 636730
Yacoub pharmacy ... 644945
Shmeisani pharmacy ... 637660
Nairouih pharmacy ... 623672
Najib pharmacy ... 847632

IRBID:
Dr. Akram Al Momani ... 248795
Alquds pharmacy ... (—)

ZARQA:
Dr. Issa Al Omari ... 901266
Khalifeh pharmacy ... 985417

EMERGENCIES

Food Control Centre ... 637111
Civil Defence Department 661111
Civil Defence Immediate Rescue ... 630341
Civil Defence Emergency ... 199
Rescue Police 192, 621111, 637777
Fire Brigade ... 617101
Blood Bank ... 775121
Highway Police ... 843402
Traffic Police ... 896390
Public Security Department ... 630321
Hotel Complaints ... 615000
Price Complaints ... 661176
Water and Sewerage Complaints ... 897467
Amman Municipality Complaints ... 767111
Telephone Information (directory assistance) ... 121
Overseas Calls ... 010230
Central Amman Telephone Repairs ... 625101
Abdali Telephone Repairs 661101
Jordan Television ... 773111
Radio Jordan ... 774111
Water Authority ... 680100
Jordan Electricity Authority Electric Power Company ... 636381
RJ Flight Information ... 08-53200
Queen Alia Intl. Airport 08-53200

HOSPITALS

AMMAN:
Hussein Medical Centre 813813/32
Khalidi Maternity. J. Amm 644281/6
Akileh Maternity. J. Amm. 642441/2
Jabal Amman Maternity ... 642362
Malhas, J. Amman ... 636140
Palestine, Shmeisani ... 664171/4
Shmeisani Hospital ... 669131
University Hospital ... 845845
Al-Muasher Hospital ... 667227/9
The Islamic, Abdali ... 666127/37
Al-Ahli, Abdali ... 664164/6
Italian, Al-Muhajreen ... 777101/3
Al-Bashir, J. Ashrafieh 775111/26
Army, Marka ... 891611/15
Queen Alia Hospital ... 686100
Amal Hospital ... 674155
ZARQA:
Zarqa Govt. Hospital (09)983323
Zarqa National Hospital (09)930564
Ibn Sina Hospital ... (09)986732
Al Hikma Modern Hospital (09)990990
IRBID:
Princess Basma Hospital ... (02)275555
Greek Catholic Hospital (02)272275
Ibn Al Nafees Hospital ... (02)247100
AQABA:
Princess Haya Hospital ... (03)314111

FOR THE TRAVELLER

QUEEN ALIA INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT

This information is supplied by Royal Jordanian (RJ) information department at the Queen Alia International Airport Tel. (08)532000-5, where it should always be verified.

ARRIVALS

Royal Jordanian (RJ) Flights (Terminal 1)

04:00 Jakarta, Kuala Lumpur (RJ)
07:30 ... Damascus (RJ)
09:15 ... Aqaba (RJ)
09:55 ... Abu Dhabi (RJ)
09:55 ... Muscat, Dubai (RJ)
10:15 ... Doha, Bahrain (RJ)
16:35 ... London (RJ)
16:45 ... Frankfurt (RJ)
... Cairo (RJ)
17:30 ... Chicago, Amsterdam (RJ)

Other Flights (Terminal 2)

04:20 ... Vienna (OS)
17:05 ... Rome (AZ)
20:00 ... Aden (DY)
20:20 ... Beirut (ME)
23:20 ... Amsterdam (KL)
23:50 ... Bucharest (RO)

DEPARTURES

Royal Jordanian (RJ) Flights (Terminal 1)

07:00 ... Aqaba (RJ)
08:15 Amsterdam, New York (RJ)
11:00 ... Montreal, Toronto (RJ)
11:30 ... Vienna, Brussels (RJ)
11:35 ... Geneva, Madrid (RJ)
11:55 ... Paris (RJ)
12:00 ... London (RJ)
12:20 ... Frankfurt (RJ)
12:45 ... Cairo (RJ)
20:05 ... Larnaca (RJ)
20:30 ... Jeddah (RJ)
21:45 ... Abu Dhabi, Dubai (RJ)
22:10 Kuala Lumpur, Singapore (RJ)

Other Flights (Terminal 2)

05:45 ... Damascus, Paris (AF)
10:15 ... Larnaca, Rome (AZ)
13:50 ... Vienna (OS)
14:00 ... Khartoum (SD)
18:05 ... Damascus (AZ)
21:00 ... Aden (DY)
00:20 ... Amsterdam (KL)
00:50 ... Bucharest (RO)

HIJAZ RAILWAY TRAIN

Dep. Amman ... 8:00 a.m. every Monday
Arr. Damascus 5:00 p.m. every Monday
Dep. Damascus 7:30 a.m. every Sunday
Arr. Amman ... 5:00 p.m. every Sunday

MARKET PRICES

Upper/lower price in fils per kg.

Apple ... 700/ 500
Banana ... 680
Banana (Mukammar) ... 620
Cabbage ... 200 / 100
Carrot ... 260/170
Cauliflower ... 150/ 100
Cucumbers (large) ... 250 / 150
Cucumbers (small) ... 440 / 300
Eggplant ... 320/ 180
Garlic ... 750/500
Grape Fruit ... 260 / 180
Lemon ... 280 / 180
Marrow (large) ... 120 / 80
Marrow (small) ... 280 / 180
Onion (green) ... 320/ 200
Onion (dry) ... 350/ 250
Orange ... 700/500
Pepper (hot) ... 550 / 400
Pepper (sweet) ... 500 / 300
Potato ... 330/ 200
Radish ... 200 / 100
Spinach ... 200/ 100
String Beans ... 950 / 800
Tomato ... 380/240

JORDAN TIMES DAILY GUIDE AND CALENDAR

هكذا من الأحمل

Her Majesty Queen Noor Monday chats with toddlers at a children's club which is part of the Deir Al Kahf Community Development Centre in Mafraq (Photo by George Crystal)

Queen opens Deir Al-Kahf community development centre

AMMAN (J.T.) — Her Majesty Queen Noor Monday opened the Deir Al-Kahf Community Development Centre to promote the health and education of people in that region, improve their quality of life, and provide them with training and income-generating opportunities, a Royal Court statement said.

In 1992, the Queen visited the Deir Al-Kahf area of Mafraq in north Jordan, and was asked by residents there to help in establishing a centre to identify and help meet their needs.

Designed to identify gaps in the development process, the centre encourages grassroots participation in decision-making, and local residents identify their own needs and personally undertake initiatives to improve their lives, said the statement.

Promoting sustainable human development, the centre implements development projects in harmony with the local environment and offers environmental assistance programmes, it added.

The statement said income-generating projects, which utilise local resources and are geared towards self-reliance, are implemented in agriculture and livestock raising.

Local women are offered sewing courses at the centre, which trains them to start their own small-scale schemes to generate income, the statement said.

The centre was incorporated into the Ministry of Social Development in 1994, which has since provided training and equipment.

During a tour of the centre's facilities, Queen Noor listened to a briefing by the director of the centre on the programmes offered to the local community, which include vocational training for men and women, income-generating schemes utilising the local resources, and programmes to improve education and health standards, the Royal Court statement said.

It said Queen Noor praised the director and staff at the centre for their dedicated efforts to improve the welfare of their community.

In response to the community's needs, the centre has already established two centres to eradicate illiteracy, the statement added.

According to the statement, the centre also focuses on child-care, and, to date, two children's clubs and a local kindergarten have been set up to implement programmes in child care and development.

Queen Noor, the statement said, visited the clubs and chatted with the children.

In the future, the Noor Al Hussein Foundation (NHF) will work with the centre to upgrade the kindergarten and offer its services to a larger number of children, said the statement.

To commemorate the visit, the Queen joined local residents in a celebration. Area representatives thanked Queen Noor for her continuous support for the community's efforts to improve its living standards and to achieve a better quality of life.

A representative of the women's sector thanked the Queen for her support to women as partners in the development of their local community, the statement said.

Queen Noor also visited the new health centre, which was established by the Ministry of Health, and spoke with its director and staff, the Royal Court said.

The Queen commended the health centre's pioneering mother-and-child health care institute, which offers medical care and counselling to local women. The health centre also houses a pharmacy, and organises lectures on health education to promote health awareness, the statement said.

Queen Noor, who was accompanied by Minister of Health Aref Batayneh and the Minister of Social Development, Salwa Damen-Masri, was received by the governor of Mafraq, the chief of Al Badia police and the district officer, the statement concluded.

Jordan is prepared to help Yemen in public administration arena —premier

AMMAN (Petra) — Prime Minister Sharif Zeid Ben Shaker Monday said Jordan was prepared to provide Yemen with expertise to help it modernise its public administration and carry out administrative reforms.

Speaking at a meeting in his office with visiting Yemeni Minister of Administrative Reform Sadeq Abu Ras and Minister of Administrative Development in Jordan Muhieddin Toq, the prime minister said the Kingdom is also interested in cooperating with Yemen in training of personnel, preparing studies on determining administrative needs and exchanges of information related to administration.

Mr. Abu Ras outlined Yemen's efforts to upgrade its public administration services, train its civil servants and update laws governing these issues.

He said Yemen was hoping to benefit from Jordanian experiences in these areas.

Mr. Abu Ras also Monday met Abdullah Ulayyan, president of the Civil Service Commission (CSC), who talked about the commission's duties and its relations with the different government departments.

Speaking at the meeting, Mr. Abu Ras said that the Yemeni government now employs 450,000 civil servants and requires help in re-organising its civil service and public administration systems especially in recruiting, training and promoting employees and also in evaluating performance and in financing administrative reform programmes.

Prime Minister Sharif Zeid Ben Shaker Monday receives visiting Yemeni Minister of Administrative Reform Sadeq Abu Ras (Petra photo)

Transport minister heads for Baghdad to explore Jordan-Iraq railway plans

AMMAN (J.T.) — Minister of Transport Samir Kawar today heads for Baghdad for talks on making Aqaba the main sea port for Iraqi imports and the prospects of establishing a railway line between Iraq and Jordan, according to a ministry statement Monday.

The statement said that while in Baghdad Mr. Kawar will also chair the Jordan side to the joint Jordan-Iraq Land Transport Company's half-yearly general assembly meeting.

The minister will also discuss with his Iraqi counterpart and other officials land and maritime transport and other transport-related issues.

According to Burhan Shreideh, the director general of the Hijaz Railway, studies have been made on linking Jordan, Iraq, Syria, Saudi Arabia and Israel via a railway.

Stressing the importance of establishing railway networks with Jordan's neighbouring Arab states and with the Gulf region, Dr. Shreideh said that while the Hijaz Railway will be transformed into a tourist railway, a new and modern network would be established for the regional project.

He also announced that a JD 120 million plan is near completion for a domestic railway in Jordan linking Amman to archaeological areas and Zarqa, the second largest city in the Kingdom.

Meanwhile, the Jordan-Iraq Land Transport Company's office in Amman announced Monday that the company has made JD 882,000 in profits last year and covered its 1994 losses of JD 429,000.

A company statement said that the company now owns 520 modern trucks and employs 800 Jordanians, adding that the trucks are used to transport goods within and between Jordan and Iraq and carry fuel and crude oil.

Samir Kawar

A honey producing plant in Naour (File photo)

Agricultural sector requires re-organisation — minister

AMMAN (Petra) — Minister of Agriculture Mansour Ben Tarif told a regional conference, which opened here Monday, that although the Kingdom's agricultural development plan has been successful in producing and exporting increasing amounts of agricultural products such as vegetables, olives, citrus fruits, dairy products, poultry and eggs, it has failed to ensure self-sufficiency in other areas.

The minister said that major progress in this sector is being hampered by the country's limited water resources and arable land which accounts only for 6.2 per cent of the total area of Jordan.

Mr. Ben Tarif added that the Kingdom has been facing difficulties in marketing its products especially in the Gulf region since the Gulf crisis when Jordanian produce was barred from the Gulf.

The minister urged direct government intervention in re-organising the agricultural sector and increasing investments in related projects.

Salem Lawzi, director general of the Agricultural Marketing Organisation (AMO), said that over the past two decades, Jordan has expanded its arable land and introduced new agricultural techniques to improve output, but he noted that most produce is marketed in neighbouring Arab states.

During the four-day conference, participants from Jordan, Yemen, Syria, Sudan, Qatar, Morocco, Egypt and Cyprus, as well as several international organisations, will discuss ways to facilitate trade flow in the North Africa and the Near East region, strategies for developing exports and trends in international trade.

They will also review working papers from Cyprus, Morocco, Egypt, Syria, Sudan, Jordan and Yemen on their respective countries' policies.

The meeting was organised at the Jerusalem Hotel by the U.N. Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO).

EC helps set up access centres to international business information

By a Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — In line with the European Union's (EU) new approach to developing closer economic ties with the Mediterranean region, the European Commission, the executive arm of the EU, is helping set up Jordan-based access to international business information, a commission official said Monday.

Jean-Pierre Pierrard, economic counsellor at the European Commission's delegation in Amman, said the commission was studying aid worth 120,000 European currency units (ECUs) about $150,000 to upgrade a "Euro Info Centre," which is housed at the Jordan Export Development and Commercial Centres Corporation (JEDCO).

The commission is also considering aid worth 100,000 ECUs, about $120,000, to establish another facility at the JEDCO, this time offering access to the Business Cooperation Network of Europe.

Essentially, both networks offer information to businessmen on what is available in the market, details of manufacturers and products and help potential business partners get in touch with each other.

But the marked difference between the Euro Info Centre (EIC) and the Business Cooperation Network is that access to the latter, which has a much wider scope of information than the former, is restricted to members.

The government of Belgium financed the establishment of the Euro Info Centre, and access from the JEDCO facility to the international network of information has to go through the Euro Info Centre in Mons, Belgium.

Mr. Pierrard told the Jordan Times that the aid under consideration for the Euro Info Centre access at the JEDCO would upgrade it as a full subscriber to the network, meaning that it would not have to restrict itself to the Mons centre.

Kamil Madanat, head of the JEDCO centre, said the facility "aims at enhancing business relations between small and medium-size enterprises (SMEs) in Jordan and the European Union in addition to other countries in the EIC network."

"In order to achieve this objective, the centre undertakes to provide information to Jordanian SMEs on European companies interested in locating partners in Jordan and answers all queries on general, legal and administrative issues that they may have on the European Community," Mr. Madanat said.

Mr. Madanat also said the Amman centre provides information to European business on laws and regulations governing trade and investment in Jordan, and details of Jordanian companies interested in doing business with Europe.

He added that the centre, which was set up last month under an agreement signed between Jordan and Belgium, had already started receiving queries from Jordanian firms.

Mr. Madanat said the Belgian government had also offered training to three Jordanians on administering the access facilities and related details.

The establishment of an access centre to the Business Cooperation Network in Amman is expected to enhance further the exchange of information between Jordanian and international businesses and make available in-depth details of possibilities of business opportunities beyond the scope of the Euro Info Centre, Mr. Pierrard said.

The setting up of the access centres comes at a time when the European Union (EU) and Jordan are closely studying enhancing trade and economic cooperation under a new trade agreement that would provide preferential treatment for Jordanian products entering European markets.

The availability of quick information in Jordan and vice-versa is also expected to help the EU's partnership programmes under which businessmen from Europe and various parts of the world get together to discuss first-hand opportunities for trade as well as joint ventures.

Ministry to focus on poverty, unemployment—Damen-Masri

AMMAN (Petra) — Minister of Social Development Salwa Damen-Masri Monday said that her ministry will work to alleviate poverty and reduce unemployment, adding that these two objectives are priority issues and fall within the directives of His Majesty King Hussein's letter to the government.

Addressing a meeting of the Ministry's Planning and Coordination Committee, Ms. Damen-Masri said she and her team will enlist the help of the media in promoting social change and will link aid provided through the National Aid Fund (NAF) to community needs.

The Ministry of Social Development, she said, will adopt new and proven methods in dealing with the problems of the needy, especially the handicapped, directing them towards income-generating projects and helping them to find jobs.

She stressed, however, that the ministry will continue to provide assistance to needy families.

The ministry will also undertake the fight against poverty and unemployment through close cooperation and coordination with voluntary organisations, said the minister.

According to Ms. Damen-Masri, the ministry plans to provide advice to families on enhancing good behavioural patterns, familiarise members of households with the basic food elements and avoid excessive consumption which has negative effects on the economy.

Suleiman Rousan, the ministry's secretary general told the meeting that coordination among the ministry's departments as well as between the ministry and voluntary organisations will be upgraded, and media campaigns launched to spread awareness against conspicuous consumption.

11 political parties condemn continuation of Iraq sanctions

AMMAN (J.T.) — Eleven political parties Monday issued a statement denouncing the continuation of the U.N.-imposed embargo on Iraq and describing the sanctions as a violation of human rights and human dignity.

This embargo, imposed since 1990 is no longer justified, but it clearly reflects the American administration's bitter hatred and enmity towards the Iraqi people and its determination to humiliate and subjugate them, said the statement.

The statement was issued one day after the Lower House of Parliament condemned the U.N. Security Council's decision last week to maintain the sanctions on Iraq.

WHAT'S GOING ON

The following listings are compiled from monthly bulletins and the daily Arabic press. Readers are advised to verify the listed time and place with the concerned institutions.

SOUTH AFRICAN FILM FESTIVAL

☆ Film entitled "The Angel, the Bicycle and the Chinaman's Finger" at the Royal Cultural Centre at 8:00 p.m.

FILM

☆ Film entitled "La Reine" at Abdul Hameed Shoman Foundation at 6:30 p.m.

LECTURE

☆ Lecture (in Arabic) entitled "Why Israel Has No Written Constitution?" by Palestinian lawyer Ali Rafi' at Abdul Hameed Shoman Foundation at 6:00 p.m.

EXHIBITIONS

☆ Exhibition of works by Spanish artist Covadonga Sarragua at the Spanish Cultural Centre.

☆ Educational works depicting the life of "Voltaire" at the French Cultural Centre.

☆ Exhibition entitled "Phase II- Doors and Windows" by Jordanian artist Ghada Dahdaleh. Also showing an exhibition by contemporary Arab artists at Darat Al Funun.

☆ Exhibition of works by Hala Mahayni at the Petra International Hotel in Aqaba.

☆ Exhibition of abstract art by Zakaria Barakat at the Housing Bank Gallery.

NEWS

☆ ABC News Highlights and McNeil-Lehrer News Hour at the American Center at 5:00 p.m.

iNET Managing Communications

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Amman 11194
Jordan

African peacekeepers shoot to disperse crowd in Liberia

MONROVIA (AFP) — African peacekeepers fired tear gas and bullets mid-morning Monday as renewed peace demonstrations in the Liberation capital turned violent.

A U.N. source said at least one person was injured by a stray bullet after members of the African peacekeeping force ECOMOG fired a hail of shots just before 11 a.m. to disperse a crowd in Viatown, a short distance from the Monrovia city centre.

Earlier ECOMOG stopped vehicles passing over two bridges into the suburb after demonstrators set tyres alight and blocked the road. Thick smoke could be seen billowing up from the area shortly before ECOMOG soldiers fired the shots.

Thousands of civilians, including two AFP journalists, were sent scurrying for cover as a military pick-up carrying some 20 soldiers fired tear gas before clearing the roadblocks and shooting.

A military ambulance was seen rushing from the scene just beforehand.

Other areas were reported calm late morning, although few businesses were open.

The incident follows a statement from ECOMOG over the weekend that further demonstrations "will not be tolerated."

Around 10 people are believed to have died here Saturday, and at least 12 were injured, after peace demonstrations turned violent after faction leaders returned from Accra, Ghana. Several of Saturday's dead are believed to have been shot by peacekeepers defending the homes of several senior factional figures.

A U.N. helicopter seen hovering over the city Monday is reported to have flown to the inland city of Gbarnga, 160 kilometres northeast of here and recently recaptured by Charles Taylor's National Patriotic Front (NPFL).

According to a U.N. source, the helicopter landed at Gbarnga in late morning.

Mr. Taylor is one of the four members of the new council to have already been appointed.

On Thursday, peace talks in Accra were suspended after five factions failed to agree who would represent them jointly on a new ruling council to be established under the Dec. 21 Accra Peace Accord.

The dispute caused the last-minute cancellation of a planned inauguration ceremony for the new council of state, or collective presidency, on Jan. 11.

The outgoing Council of State, or collective presidency, has appealed for calm and its chairman, David Kpomakpor has tried to organise a meeting with warlords Monday to try to break the impasse.

The Liberian conflict began on Dec. 24, 1989, as a rebellion by Charles Taylor's NPFL against the blood-stained regime of former President Samuel Doe, who was tortured to death by an NPFL splinter group nine months later in Monrovia.

Information Minister Joe Mulbah said the government was "aware of the anger" of civilians, but added that it was time for every Liberian to refrain from violence.

Armed Forces of Liberia (AFL) chief of staff General Hezekiah Bowen said that "consultations" to resolve the deadlocked issue were continuing and promised a quick solution.

The Dec. 21 Accra Peace Accord was signed by all seven armed groups plus a civilian delegate and led to a shaky ceasefire on Dec. 28.

Under the accord, the new council will appoint the new government to run the country until elections in November.

Sinn Fein resumes talks with U.K.

BELFAST (R) — The IRA's political wing, Sinn Fein, resumed talks with British officials Monday demanding that London end "stalling tactics" which it says are undermining Northern Ireland's delicate five-month-old peace.

Sinn Fein President Gerry Adams said in a statement Sunday night that there was "widespread concern that the peace process is being stalled by the British government on the talks front as well as in other ways."

His anger was aimed at Britain's insistence that the Irish Republican Army and its loyalist foes decommission their arsenals before either are invited to new all-party talks being sponsored by Britain and Ireland to find a lasting settlement.

Monday's talks were the third round British officials have held with Sinn Fein since the IRA launched Northern Ireland into an unknown period of peace by declaring a ceasefire last September.

Sinn Fein says it has no control over IRA weapons used in a bloody campaign to end British rule of Northern Ireland and accuses Britain of discriminating against Republican votes by excluding it from full talks vital to the peace process.

Sinn Fein leader Martin McGuinness told Reuters: "Our position is that there is a public expectation, which is an increasing one, that all-party talks must be the next stage of the process and the British government need not put the cart before the horse, which is exactly what the whole decommissioning argument is about..."

Mr. McGuinness, leader of the Sinn Fein delegation, denied suggestions that the arms-before-talks impasse was a crisis and said Sinn Fein would continue talking.

"We have to continue discussions with the British government on the issue of how speedily they intend to move to all party talks. I don't know at this stage how long that's going to take."

The exploratory talks between Sinn Fein and Britain take place against a background of five months of unprecedented peace after the IRA and its loyalist foes declared ceasefires to try to join in talks being sponsored in the Anglo-Irish peace drive.

But Britain says there can be no all-party talks to find a lasting political settlement if the IRA and the loyalists hang onto their weapons and the option to re-start their campaigns if they fear the talks are going nowhere.

Twin truces since September by the IRA and loyalist rivals fighting to keep the province British allowed Britain to pull its troops off the streets Sunday for the first time in 25 years.

The move will apply in daylight hours only and Britain says the troops will stay in their barracks and will not be sent back to Britain, as Sinn Fein demands.

The Irish government, Britain's partner in framing the next phase of the process, is urging flexibility to end the deadlock and maintain a hard won momentum which is restoring confidence and normality to Northern Ireland.

The next phase, due to be unveiled at an Anglo-Irish summit in coming weeks, is expected to propose cross-border bodies to run trade and tourism to break down north-south barriers and mistrust between Catholic and Protestant.

But Sunday pro-British Protestant politicians issued a warning that they were prepared to topple the British government if Prime Minister John Major diluted the province's British status by giving Dublin a say in how it is run.

David Trimble of the Ulster Unionist Party, the biggest Protestant group which has nine members of parliament who usually vote for Mr. Major's administration, said that if upcoming proposals were deemed damaging, then "we would no longer to be able to support the government."

Richard Dreyfuss in hospital after car crash

LOS ANGELES (R) — Film actor Richard Dreyfuss was involved in a car crash and was admitted to a hospital complaining of chest and stomach pains, his spokesman said. Dreyfuss, 47, underwent medical tests and no injuiries were found, but he was being held overnight for observation at Holy Cross Hospital, his spokesman Richard Grant said. The actor was driving alone when he crashed into a light pole sunday afternoon. "He complained of chest and stomach pains but the cat-scan came up negative. From what I can tell he wasn't injured," Mr. Grant said. Dreyfuss was listed in stable condition and was expected to be released Monday. The New York native began his career as a stage actor. He made his film debut in 1968 and went on to win an Academy Award for Best Actor in the 1977 movie The Goodbye Girl. His other credits include The Apprenticeship Of Duddy Kravitz, Close Encounters Of The Third Kind, Down And Out In Beverly Hills, Stakeout and Tin Men.

Zhirinovsky to run for presidency in 1996

MOSCOW (R) — Russia's ultra-nationalist leader Vladimir Zhirinovsky has announced he will run for president in the 1996 elections, ITAR-TASS news agency said Monday.

Mr. Zhirinovsky, whose Liberal Democratic Party became the largest single faction in the lower house in 1993 elections, also told reporters in the semi-autonomous Komi Republic that he was ready to support early presidential and parliamentary polls.

Elections for the upper and lower parliament chambers are scheduled for December 1995 and for the presidency in June 1996.

President Boris Yeltsin's chief spokesman has indicated the Kremlin leader will stand in the next presidential elections, though the outcome of the bloody military campaign in Chechenya could make a big difference to his chances of re-election.

Mr. Yeltsin, once praised for braving tanks to defy hardline Communists and now under fire for turning those tanks on civilians, has lost the support of his democratic allies who have deserted him in droves because of the Chechenya conflict.

The current speaker of the Duma, Ivan Rybkin, Prime Minister Viktor Chernomyrdin and Aleksander Nemtsov, a young, market-oriented regional leader, have also been mooted as likely rivals of Mr. Yeltsin in the 1996 elections.

Former Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev has also indicated he might run for the presidency, although he remains deeply unpopular at home.

Under the Russian constitution, Mr. Yeltsin, 64 next month and elected for a five-year term on June 12, 1991, is free to stand for reelection.

Indian opposition blasts reforms

NEW DELHI (AFP) — India's main opposition party blasted the government's economic reforms Monday, and warned that a crisis in the ruling party had created a political vacuum in the country.

Economic liberalisation initiated in 1991 had only benefitted the rich, BJP President Lal Krishna Advani told reporters, releasing a policy statement ahead of state polls starting next month.

"These so-called reforms affect a very small, top fringe of the population," Mr. Advani said. "They may make things easy for big industry.

"But the net result is the rich become richer and the poor poorer. This country has actually experienced this in the last three years," said Mr. Advani, whose Hindu-revivalist party is the main opposition in parliament.

Mr. Advani said his party was committed to ending state controls over the economy, but opposed the rampant wooing of multinationals and foreign companies to solve India's economic problems.

"The present reforms concern only big industry and big business," he said. "They are is also infatuated with globalisation... All this talk of doing away with subsidies is irrelevant to countries like India."

"The government has developed a feeling in the last three years that India cannot surmount its economic problems without international help, without the World Bank and IMF," he added. "This is extremely damaging."

Mr. Advani said the electoral defeat of Prime Minister P.V. Narasimha Rao's Congress (I) Party in two states last month was a condemnation of the economic reforms.

Mr. Advani's comments came ahead of elections in six more of India's 25 states which begin next month. The BJP is expected to pose a stiff challenge to the Congress in two of the major states.

Colombia on alert after ice, mud slide

BOGOTA (R) — Ice and mud slid down a volcano in central Colombia Sunday prompting the evacuation of hundreds of people in anticipation of an avalanche, officials said.

"We are all on alert," National Police Chief General Rosso Serrano told local radio.

The government geology institute Ingeominas told Reuters a sudden rise in rivers flowing down from the central mountain range in Tolima province was likely caused by dislodged ice or rock from the Nevado Del Ruiz volcano.

The institute's instruments did not register any seismic activity from the dormant volcano, he said.

"We don't have any sign of internal activity from the volcano," said institute official Fernando Munoz.

The slide nevertheless swept away a bridge near Murillo, the closest town to the volcano, located more than 62 miles (99 km) west of Bogota.

A woman was reported missing in the area but it was not clear whether it was related to the slide.

The sweep of mud and rock and the rush of swollen rivers raised fears of a natural disaster on the scale of the avalanche that obliterated the town of Armero and its 20,000 inhabitants following a 1985 eruption from the volcano.

Rising 1,772 feet (537 metres) above sea level, Nevado Del Ruiz is the highest in a chain of volcanos running along the country's central mountain range.

The mayor of Honda, the largest town in the area north of the volcano in a valley along the Magdalena River, told local radio authorities evacuated people attending an annual fishing festival near the river as a precaution.

A Murillo municipal official told local radio officials there were taking similar precautions. "We're warning all residents to be careful because there could be more slides," he said.

General Rosso Serrano said army and police would work alongside other rescue teams at dawn to assess the extent of the damage caused by the slide.

Rent-a-dog company is a howling success

TOKYO (AFP) — Japanese companies have found a new way to create a relaxed office atmosphere: Rent a dog. Pet Plan 110, a Tokyo company which specialised in renting animals to film makers, found a new market niche in companies and businesses, the economic Nikkei Weekly reported Sunday. It started the service two years ago and now has seven regular clients, including a bedding wholesale firm, a computer software house and a design office. The cost: 300,000 yen ($3,000) monthly to have a dog three times a week, and more than 400,000 yen for five days a week. "The dog helps sooth stress and create a harmonious atmosphere," said a client of the service. "Before the dog was brought on board, there was a lot of bickering and office politics." The renting of cats and dogs to individuals for a night, a weekend or a holiday is also becoming a boom industry in Japan, the newspaper added. Animals are often banned from the small apartments that many Japanese live in.

Mexican government says 1st day of peace talks with rebels 'positive'

SAN CRISTOBAL DE LAS CASAS, Mexico (AFP) — Mexico's government said Sunday that its first day of peace talks with rebels after nearly a year's break were positive.

"The meeting developed in an atmosphere of respect and direct dealings," the Interior Ministry added in a statement released in Mexico City.

Interior Minister Esteban Moctezuma headed a three-member government delegation to the talks, which a statement by the rebel Zapatista National Liberation Army said were held in the rebel stronghold in the Lacandon jungle near the Guatemalan border.

The Zapatista delegation was led by Sub-Commander Marcos, the masked, pipe-smoking rebel leader, according to the Interior Ministry. Roman Catholic Bishop Samuel Ruiz mediated the talks, as he did the first round of discussions last year.

The sole item on the agenda Sunday was to discuss steps to dispell the threat of armed clashes and "the atmosphere of imminent war," the rebel statement said.

The talks marked the first time that the government of President Ernesto Zedillo has held talks with the rebels, who rose up Jan. 1, 1994. The earlier talks were held with the government of former President Carlos Salinas.

They come as Mr. Zedillo, who was sworn in on Dec. 1, strives to stabilise the Mexican financial markets and contain an economic crisis that erupted amid a revival of tensions in Chiapas.

The markets appeared to have been reassured for the moment by a promise of a massive U.S. rescue package for the Mexican economy. But the rebellion in the south and disputes with the opposition over electoral fraud are still potential flashpoints.

Seeking to mend fences, Mr. Zedillo met with leaders of the centre-left Party of the Democratic Revolution (PRD) Friday and subsequently called for a national dialogue with election reform at the top of the agenda. The Institutional Revolutionary Party has ruled Mexico without interruption since 1929.

Debate also looms over the terms of the U.S. rescue package, which would call for the use of Mexican oil receipts as collateral for up to $40 billion in U.S. loan guarantees.

The use of oil receipts has been criticised by commentators and some politicians, who fear a veiled manoeuvre by the United States to gain control of Mexico's oil industry, a touchstone of Mexican nationalism.

The last round of direct peace talks in Chiapas were held in early March. Rebels formally broke off the talks in June on the grounds that no progress had been made. A de facto ceasefire has held since Jan. 13, 1994.

Communists sound alert over Deng

BEIJING (AFP) — China's Communist Party Monday warned of "new circumstances" looming in a new stage in the campaign to prepare world opinion for the death of ailing paramount leader Deng Xiaoping.

The warning came in a front page commentary in the People's Daily, the party newspaper, appealing for the country to unite around the 90-year-old Deng.

"Unity of thought around Deng Xiaoping's theory of socialism with Chinese characteristics is fundamental to continue reform and modernisation and to overcome difficulties," said the editorial.

"China's global situation does not stop changing, it is necessary to unite our thoughts to adapt to new circumstances," added the party newspaper.

It added how President Jiang Zemin "has said how we must remain faithful to the thoughts to Deng Xiaoping and Mao Zedong."

The appeal, although not heralding Mr. Deng's imminent death, came only four days after his daughter Deng Rong warned that the patriarch's health was declining further each day.

Only a few weeks ago Mr. Deng's family were all saying he was doing fine. And as recently as last Thursday the Foreign Ministry said he was "in good health." There was still no official reaction Monday to Deng Rong's surprising and worrying statement about her father's health.

A Western diplomat in Beijing said "she was not acting on her own initiative. She obviously was given the green light at the highest levels to drop such a bombshell."

"Primarily this would be to prepare international opinion, then the Chinese are going to be informed little by little since the pro-Communist newspapers in Hong Kong have reported Deng Rong's declarations," the diplomat added.

Last week the semi-official China News Service released a photo of Deng Xiaoping taken last Oct. 1, showing an enfeebled old man unable to stand and barely registering what was going on around him. The photograph was only published in China by the Shanghai Liberation newspaper.

Mr. Deng's previous appearance was on Feb. 9 last year when he was shown on television to mark the Lunar New Year Festival. China has hinted in recent days though that the senior leader might not make his traditional appearance this year. The festival falls on Jan. 29 this year.

Though Mr. Jiang is best placed to succeed Mr. Deng as China's senior leader, the country risks serious instability after the death of Mr. Deng, according to some foreign and Chinese analysts.

But the People's Daily, while calling on party officials and the public to close ranks and "unite their hearts," said people should not be worried despite the many changes taking place, and painted a rosy picture of China since Mr. Deng's spectacular relaunch of economic reforms in 1992.

"In three years, reform and opening up have made progress, the national economy is developing healthily and China has achieved remarkable victories in a world context," it said.

'Free Willy' whale is U.S. bound

NEWPORT, Oregon (AFP) — The ailing whale that had the starring role in the film Free Willy is being brought back to the United States from Mexico after money was raised to build him a new home. Keiko, a seven-metre (21-foot), 3,175 kilo (3.5 tonnes) killer whale, is currently ailing in a marine park pool in Mexico where the orca is said to have infected skin and is losing weight. But more than $5 million has been collected and a new whale home is to be bilt in the form of a 7.5 million liter (two-million gallons) tank for Keiko at the Oregon Coast Aquarium. Earth Island Institute, the San Francisco organisation behind the money collection, said all that remains is for the deal to be signed. More money will be raised in connection with Free Willy 2: The Adventure Home" which is due for release in July. Warner Bros., and New Regency Productions both donated $2 million as did an anonymous donor from Washington state. The first Free Willy, was a box-office smash in 1993, telling the tale of a friendship between a small boy and the huge whale which is being cooped up in a very small water tank.

Feud begins among Simpson's lawyers

NEW YORK (R) — As football legend O.J. Simpson heads for trial on murder charges, an extraordinary and apparently irreparable breach has developed between two of his lawyers, Robert Shapiro and his former mentor, F. Lee Bailey, the New York Times reported in Monday editions.

The paper said the feud, which will be left to a third member of the defence team, Johnnie Cochran, to referee or resolve, is an embarrassing distraction, coming only four days before opening statements.

It said the dispute stems from the results of an internal investigation by Simpson's main investigator, William Pavelic of Los Angeles, into disclosures to the press.

According to the Times, Mr. pavelic concluded and reported to Mr. Simpson that for the past few months Mr. Bailey and his associates had engaged in a systematic and elaborate campaign of disclosures to the press, principally to columnists for eastern papers, CNN and supermarket tabloids.

The object, Mr. Pavelic concluded, was to denigrate Mr. Shapiro's legal skills and sense of discretion, and to enhance Mr. Bailey's own standing in the case.

Mr. Shapiro and Mr. Bailey have a long history and friendship, with Mr. Bailey acting as a kind of mentor and father figure to Mr. Shapiro.

However, the Times said Mr. Pavelic's investigation showed that Mr. Bailey and his entourage, including three investigators he brought into the case, had planted articles saying Mr. Shapiro was more a negotiator than an aggressive trial lawyer and that he lacked courtroom experience.

The paper said it also blamed the Bailey team for more recent reports that Mr. Simpson had moved Mr. Shapiro aside and elevated Mr. Bailey.

The result, the Times said, has been a chasm in Mr. Simpson's defence team. For the past three weeks, it said, Mr. Shapiro has refused to speak with Mr. Bailey and says he will never speak with him again except on urgent matters pertaining to the case.

It is also said Mr. Shapiro has refused to be photographed with him or even ride in the same car. He has also removed Mr. Bailey's name from his letterhead, where he is listed as counsel, the Times said.

"The landmark word to me is loyalty," Mr. Shapiro told the Times in an interview. "I felt a lifelong commitment to him because he gave me the opportunity to represent him when his professional reputation was at stake," he said. When Mr. Bailey was charged with drunken driving in 1982, Mr. Shapiro was his lawyer.

"But recent events have been so painful that we'll never be able to have a relationship again," Mr. Shapiro said.

Mr. Simpson is on trial for the June 12 murders of his former wife, Nicole Brown Simpson and her friend, Ronald Goldman outside Nicole's townhouse. He has pleaded not guilty.

A blood spot found in the white car of Mr. Simpson shows a mixture of DNA from Mr. Simpson and the two people he is charged with murdering, Newsweek reports in its upcoming issue.

Quoting an unidentified source, the Newsweek in its issue available at newsstands Monday, said DNA analysis shows that virtually all the blood in Mr. Simpson's car, a Ford Bronco, matches the former football player's, with the exception of one spot that contains a mixture of blood from Mr. Simpson, his former wife and Mr. Goldman.

A jury has been picked for the Los Angeles trial and opening statements in the case are scheduled to start Thursday.

Mr. Simpson's lawyers will argue that given the violent nature of the crime and the small amount of blood found in the Bronco and Mr. Simpson's home, that he couldn't have committed the murders, the Newsweek said.

The defence team will also assert that not one but two sets of footprints led away from the bodies — neither of which they believe match Mr. Simpson's shoe size, Newsweek said.

In a Newsweek telepehone poll of 757a Americans, conducted last Thursday and Friday, 60 per cent said reported allegations of spousal abuse by Mr. Simpson are relevant and should be presented to the jury.

The poll, which appears in the same issue and which has a four point margin of error, also found that 75 per cent of those asked thought the courts and legal system have been fair so far to the former football great.

Setback raises doubts about Japan's space plans

TOKYO (R) — Officials from Japan's ambitious but ill-starred space programem wee shaking their heads Monday after a German-Japanese unmanned space capsule plunged into the Pacific Ocean just hours after its launch.

"Regretably, there's no denying that Japan's rocket was the cause of the (satellite) straying off course," said Motoki Hidana of the Institute for Space and Astronautical Science (ISAS).

"We feel a great responsibility (for the failure) and we will do our utmost to investigate the cause," project leader Hidana told a news conference at the Uchinoura Space Centre, a launch site about 900 kilometres south of Tokyo.

German controllers lost contact with the capsule soon after its launch and later said they believed it had burned up while a re-entering the Earth's atmosphere.

The crash of the 750-kilogramme EXPRESS (Experimental Re-Entry Space System) somewhere in the Pacific between Japan and Chile was especially embarrassing as it was Japan's first joint space project with Germany.

The debacle also ends an unbroken string of successful space projects by ISAS, the Japanese Education Ministry's low-budget alternative to the National Space Development Agency (NASDA), the Science and Technology Agency's more costly space programme.

Bureaucratic rivalries make for a chilly relationship between the two groups, which share tracking facilities but maintain separate launch sites and compete for Japan's space budget.

The achievements of ISAS include a 1986 probe that made a rendezvous with Halley's Comet, the 1987 detection of a supernova by an observation satellite and a 1991 mission that made Japan only the third nation after the United States and the Soviet Unino to send a spacecfaft into orbit around the moon.

By contrast the big-ticket NASDA has been criticised for letting pride over-ride pragmatism for its drive to develop a home-grown space programme that has resulted in cost over-runs, delays and a string of mishaps.

NASDA's annual budget of roughly 150 billion yen ($1.5 billion) is about six times the amount spent on the purely science-oriented ISIS programme.

Last September Makiko Tanaka, director-general of the science agency accused NASDA of wasting money and underplaying serious foul-ups after an uninsured, 41.5 billion yen ($415 million) satellite was abandoned as space junk after engine failure stopped it from reaching its proper orbit.

The outspoken Tanaka complained that mission controlles did not explain how serious the situation was even after correcting the orbit became impossible.

Last fall's botched project was a blow to the agency's pride because it was intended to show that Japan's first home-grown satellite launcher, the 270 billion yen ($2.7 billion) H2, could compete with commercial launchers from the United States, Europe, China and Russia.

The declared aim of the H2, which was dogged by engine technology problems and had its maiden launch delayed two years is to capture a share of the launch market.

However, the H2's high costs — 19 billion yen ($190 million) per launch, nearly twice that of rivals like the European Arianespace — means it will not be competitive for a long time and is likely to rely on Japanese government contracts for much of its work.

Monday's ill-fated EXPRESS was launched with an M3S2 rocket in a project that cost ISAS about 16 billion yen ($160 million), Kyodo News Agency reported.

As the investigation into the crash continued, it was not immediately clear what impact it would have on either of Japan's space programme.

Japanese media speculated the fiasco would draw critical attention to future space plans, including NASDA's plan to launch the unmanned shuttle craft Hope early in the next century.

Officer carpeted over 'Nazi justice' slur

HAMBURG, Germany (AFP) — A German general has been ordered to explain remarks drawing a parallel between the country's constitutional court and a Nazi tribunal, the Defence Ministry said late Saturday. The ministry was reacting to a report in the popular Sunday paper Bild Am Sonntag quoting Major-General Gerd Schultze-Ronhof as criticising a court decision acquitting a motorist who wrote on his car "soldiers are murderers," a phrase of writer Kurt Tucholsky. Gen. Schultze-Ronhof, commander of the 1st Armoured Division, told a New Year reception attended by 400 people that the court had lost credibility, Bild Am Sonntag said.

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A Bosnian soldier guards U.N. helicopters at Tuzla Airport (AFP photo)

U.N. accuses Bosnian factions of breaking latest ceasefire

SARAJEVO (R) — The United Nations accused Bosnia's Muslim-led government army and its Serb foes Monday of violating the latest ceasefire and called on them to rein in their troops in the northwestern Bihac enclave.

In the latest breach of the ceasefire, Bosnian government forces launched a surprise attack against the Serbs with the aim of recapturing the Klokot water reservoir which supplies Bihac town.

The Serbs retaliated with mortar attacks on the town, a U.N.-designated safe area, killing at least seven people over the weekend.

U.N. spokesman Colonel Gary Coward condemned both sides for what he called "flagrant contraventions" of a four-month ceasefire signed by the main warring factions on Dec. 31 and intended to cover the whole Bosnia.

"The Bosnian army have established a new confrontation line since their attack on Klokot on Friday afternoon. Their goal appeared to be to get back the Klokot water reservoir which supplies Bihac town," said Major Koos Sol, another U.N. spokesman.

The commander of U.N. troops in Bosnia, Lieutenant-General Sir Michael Rose, had written to both army high commands reminding them of their commitment to the ceasefire and urging them to restrain their forces in the Bihac area.

The local U.N. commander in Bihac had subsequently managed to arrange a local truce Sunday evening and it appeared to be holding, the United Nations said.

But fighting between Bosnian government troops and secessionist Muslims who did not sign the countrywide ceasefire raged on near Velika Kladusa, north of Bihac, with many artillery explosions near the town.

The reopening of routes into Sarajevo has been seen by the United Nations as an important part of the ceasefire agreement.

But this has been blocked by the refusal of Bosnian forces to vacate a demilitarised zone near Sarajevo, as demanded by the Serbs, and the inability of both sides to agree on what kind of traffic would be allowed to use the roads.

A U.N. helicopter reconnaissance of the Mount Igman demilitarised zone Sunday revealed 50 armed Bosnian government troops still inside the violation of the new year cessation of hostilities accord.

"It would appear that a number of Bosnian army troops have returned to the zone," Col. Coward told a news briefing.

U.N. spokesman Paul Risley described the number of soldiers in the zone as "military insignificant and symbolic."

But this was not helping the U.N. cement the ceasefire by overcoming Serb objections to opening routes to Sarajevo.

The United Nations had once again asked the Bosnian government to withdraw all its troops from the demilitarised zone and in the meantime the roads to Sarajevo remained closed.

Explaining the stumbling blocks, Major Sol said: "The main point of discussion now is which humanitarian agencies should be allowed to use the roads."

He said the Bosnian Serb Army wanted only internationally recognised agencies — about eight in total — to have access to the roads. But the Bosnian government side wanted all humanitarian agencies to use the routes.

Maj. Sol said the Bosnians' desire to slip as many commercial trucks as possible into the flow of humanitarian vehicles was a major stumbling block in opening the roads.

Meanwhile the United Nations' Protection Force (UNPROFOR) has called for the immediate withdrawal from Bosnia of regular Croatian army forces fighting alongside Bosnian Croats in the southwest of the country, U.N. officials said here Monday.

UNPROFOR also called on warring Bosnian Croat and Serb forces to observe the ceasefire which came into force at the start of last year.

Despite the truce, concluded for three months, Bosnian Croats, backed by Croatian Army Forces, have pressed on with a successful offensive in the Livno and Kupres areas and could strike next at the Serb-held towns of Bosansko Grahovo and Glamoc in Bosnia, and Knin in Croatia.

Serb forces opened up with tanks and artillery on Croat forces in the Livno area Monday morning, according to the Croatian News agency, quoting Croat forces.

UNPROFOR southwestern sector commander, General Robert Gordon, Sunday called on Bosnian Croat and Bosnian Serb representatives, meeting in Banja Luka, to "stop the killings" and observe the truce, which also calls for the "withdrawal of foreign forces engaged on both sides," according to an UNPROFOR statement issued in Gornji Vakuf.

The statement made no reference to what foreign forces were engaged in the fighting, but secessionist Serb forces from Croatia are known to have joined with Bosnian Serbs in their assault on Bihac, while regular Croatian forces have beefed up Bosnian Croat HVO forces.

The secessionist Serb forces from Croatia deny involvement in Bosnia, while regular Croatian forces stress their intervention was demanded by the Sarajevo government and is in line with a military cooperation deal between the two countries.

The truce agreement for Bosnia was agreed to by Serb, Croat and Muslim forces.

UNPROFOR has asked Croat and Serbs forces to allow the interposition of peacekeepers on frontlines in the southwest of the country.

A NATO jet helping enforce a U.N. no-fly zone over Bosnia mistakenly fired two rockets into the ground during a training exercise Sunday but no one was injured, a U.N. spokesman said.

British Labour leader's honeymoon ends

LONDON (R) — Less than a week into the British parliament's new session, the spotlight has switched from beleaguered Prime Minister John Major to new moderate Labour leader Tony Blair.

After an unusually long period of political grace since winning the party leadership in July, Mr. Blair has suddenly run into internal squalls over rail privatisation and his plans to rewrite Labour's constitution and set up a Scottish assembly.

Mr. Blair's energetic leadership has propelled the Labour Party to a record opinion poll lead to more than 40 points over Mr. Major's Conservatives, who have themselves been wrestling with deep divisions in their ranks.

So far his poll lead is untouched, but the media fascination has begun to pall. Newspapers traditionally aligned with the ruling Conservatives, which have been captivated by Mr. Blair since his election, are now turning their fire on him.

The mass-selling tabloid Sun newspaper hit out at Mr. Blair in an editorial Monday, warning: "Now that the 'new' Labour policies are aired, they can see the glittering prize slipping from their grasp."

And the Times accused Labour of "economic naivety" over its opposition to Mr. Major's rail privatisation plans, while columnist William Rees-Mogg, the paper's former editor, said that despite an apparent reformation, Labour remained a high-tax party.

Mr. Blair's troubles stem from his efforts to transform a party which has been out of office for over 15 years and which has spent much of the time riven by internal feuding.

Warning members not to be lulled into complacency by the huge opinion poll lead, Mr. Blair has tried to reposition Labour to win over disaffected Conservative voters.

But as the initial euphoria subsided, feuding erupted with a vengeance over the new leaders plans to drop a symbolic reference to mass nationalisation from Labour's constitution.

That, and apparent flip-flops over rail privatisation, have given new ammunition to the Conservatives — for months preoccupied with sleaze scandals, outrage over prison breakouts and a rebellion by anti-Europeans in the parliamentary party.

Conservatives Monday targeted Labour's mixed messages on rail privatisation, contrasting deputy leader John Prescott's vow to ensure a publicly owned railway with Mr. Blair's warning that once privatised, Labour could not guarantee it could take the railways back into public ownership.

S. African cabinet opens 2-day strategy meeting

CAPE TOWN (R) — The South African government began a two-day brainstorming session at a secret venue near Pretoria Monday, mainly to thrash out priorities and allocations for the March 15 budget, government sources said.

The sources said the meeting was unlikely to touch on a row over the pre-election indemnification of 3,500 policemen and two former government ministers for prosecution for political crimes committed under apartheid.

But they said there could be lively debate on defence spending, with government ministers divided on whether to slash the military budget in favour of social programmes.

Government spokesman Joel Netshitenzhe confirmed that the meeting, including deputy ministers who do not normally sit in on cabinet meetings, and senior advisors began Monday.

"The meeting combines formal and informal sessions over two days, but it's mainly a brainstorming event on strategy issues," he said.

"It's more forward looking than backward looking, but obviously the lessons of the first-seven months in power will play a role," he told Reuters.

Mr. Netshitenzhe declined to comment on the specific agenda for the so-called "bosberaad" (bush council), but government sources said ministers would mainly be looking at the March budget for fiscal 1995/96.

"Last year they looked at the overall framework for the budget and the principles to be applied. This is where the crunch decisions will be taken in terms of who gets what in march," one source said.

President Nelson Mandela said last year the delayed budget presented under majority rule on June 22 did not fully reflect the priorities of the country's first all-race government, which was elected a month earlier.

He promised then that the 1995/96 budget would "be more sensitive to the needs of the majority."

Mr. Mandela's African National Congress (ANC) came under fire at a December congress for failing to address the needs of the poor, including jobs, housing and schooling, more quickly.

One government source involved in preparations for the meeting said one of the most likely areas of conflict at the two-day meeting would be defence spending.

"There are people in the ANC who feel that defence spending should be slashed and others who are adamant that we have to increase the army budget," he said.

He said proposals to buy ships and attack helicopters could come under scrutiny.

The source said the government was unlikely to address the row over revelations last week that former President F.W. De Klerk's white government granted indemnity to former police and defence ministers and to 3,500 policemen during its final days in office.

"My feeling is that these specific issues would better be left for a formal cabinet meeting," Mr. Netshitenzhe said. The first such meeting is Wednesday.

Assassination plot trails Pope to Papua New Guinea

PORT MORESBY (R) — Just hours before Pope John Paul arrived in Papua New Guinea Monday, police in the South Pacific nation launched a massive hunt for two men suspected of plotting to assassinate him, a secret-service officer said.

Suspicions were raised when the men, described as Iranian, checked out of a hotel near the airport in the capital, Port Moresby.

Police ordered the manhunt two hours before the Pope arrived in hot sticky weather to a raucous airport welcome by 30,000 people, many bare footed and some wearing tribal face paint, grass skirts and feather headdresses.

The two wanted men were suspected to being involved in a plot uncovered in Manila last week at the start of the 74-year-old Pope's four-nation Asia-Pacific tour.

"We are treating this very, very seriously," the Papua New Guinea officer told Reuters. He refused to give details of the men's suspected involvement or their identities.

On his way out of the Philippines, the Pope had to change his route to Manila airport because "terrorists" had acquired details of the original route, a top security officer said.

"We found the route of the Pope in the hands of the terrorists and this had some markings," Philippine presidential security chief Brigadier-General Leo Alvez told reporters.

Despite the manhunt in Port Moresby, Pope John Paul travelled in an uncovered "popemobile" along the 14 kilometres of potholed road into the city centre to celebrate an evening mass.

The Pope pleaded in an airport address for peace on the Papua New Guinea island of Bougainville, a mainly Catholic territory where rebels are fighting a six-year secessionist campaign with heavy loss of life on both sides.

"If you bear arms unjustly, I urge you to put them down and seek reconciliation," the Pope said, as villagers who had trekked to the airport climbed trees and onto roofs to get a glimpse of the man they affectionately call "Papa Santu".

The manhunt is the latest security threat in the 11-day tour by the Pope, who Philippines police said was the target of a Muslim extremist assassination plot in Manila.

At least two people were arrested in Manila but police were still looking for another 20 suspects.

An undisclosed number of bomb threats also fuelled fears that Muslim extremists would try to sabotage a U.S. plane to protest against the Pope's tour.

The U.S. Federal Aviation Administration Monday said the U.S. government had ordered U.S. airlines to further tighten security on flights in South East Asia in response to threats.

But the Vatican has shrugged off security concerns and, after the initial scare in Manila, the Pope's visit ran smoothly.

The Pope told the crowd at Port Moresby Airport that it was a "joy to return to this beautiful country". He last visited in 1984.

The highlight of his two-day visit will be the beatification of Peter Torot, a catechist killed by lethal injection in 1945 by occupying Japanese forces for refusing to deny his faith.

The Pope was due to conduct the ceremony at Peter Torot's hometown of Rabaul but the venue was changed after the town was virtually destroyed by volcanic eruptions last September.

Pope John Paul offered encouragement for the people on Bougainville, 800 kilometres northeast of the capital, before blessing the cheering throng in their pidgin.

"To you, people of Bougainville, I send a special word of encouragement," the Pope said. "If you have been treated unjustly, I invite you to remove bitterness from your hearts."

The Pope also urged the victims of the Rabaul eruptions and those made homeless by heavy flooding in the country's southern highlands last year to "take heart".

"Although I cannot come to you, I am close to you in your difficulties and I assure you of my fervent prayers," he said.

Meanwhile, a Chinese Catholic delegation warned the Vatican Monday against meddling in China's internal affairs in a strong protest over the display of Taiwan's flag at the World Youth Day meeting in Manila.

The delegation from China's breakaway Catholic Church expressed its "strong indignation" over the incident a day after most of its 24 members walked out towards the end of an open air mass being said by Pope John Paul in Manila.

The delegation, in a statement, accused organisers of the youth assembly of "deliberately creating a situation of 'two Chinas', seriously hurting the feelings of the Chinese Catholics."

Witnesses said delegation members staged the walkout after flags of assembly participants were brought on to the grandstand where the pope was saying mass towards the end of the service.

The appearance of the Taiwan flag caused a commotion among the Chinese delegates but their walkout went virtually unnoticed.

Some four million people were in or around the central Manila park where the mass, the highlight of the Pope's visit, was held.

Beijing severed diplomatic relations with the Vatican in the 1950s after the holy see established formal relations with Taiwan, which China considers a renegade province.

Taiwan is a member of Rome's World Youth Day Assembly. China is not a member but its Catholic Patriotic Association (CPA) sent a delegation on the invitation of the Philippine church.

"The CPA has reiterated on many occasions that Sino-Vatican relations cannot be normalised unless the Vatican severs its so-called diplomatic relations with Taiwan, recognises the government... (in Beijing) as the sole legal government representing the entire Chinese people and refrains from interference in China's internal affairs, including religious affairs," the delegation said.

The display of the Taiwan flag at the mass was "absolutely unacceptable to us," it said.

The Chinese embassy in Manila rejected a call by the Pope for Chinese Catholics to recognise the supremacy of the Vatican.

Embassy spokesman Deng Xiagun said the Vatican should first sever ties with Taiwan before talks on restoring formal relations with Rome could begin.

"Our position has not changed. The Vatican should recognise the People's Republic of China as the sole legal government of the Chinese people," Mr. Deng told reporters.

The Pope told members of China's state-backed church they could not consider themselves genuine Catholics if they rejected the principle of unity with the Pope.

He made the remarks in a radio message broadcast from Manila during his four-day visit.

Japan Socialist rebels form new bloc

TOKYO (AFP) — Prime Minister Tomiichi Murayama suffered a major setback Monday when dissident members of his Social Democratic Party launched a new parliamentary bloc as their first step toward forming their own party.

Two dozen Socialists from both the upper and lower house of parliament joined six other members of the Social Democratic Party (SDP) to form the Democratic League, a separate parliamentary voting group, officials said.

Sadao Yamahana, a former SDP chairman, was named as chief of the group, which will hold an inauguration ceremony Wednesday to announce their policy platform, officials said. The group is due to launch a separate political party in mid-February, they said.

The rebels include 17 members of the powerful lower house, accounting for more than 24 per cent of the SDP members in the 511-seat chamber, the officials said.

Monday's breakup was seen as the most serious blow to Mr. Murayama since he was elected in June as the country's first Socialist premier in four decades. His coalition has the backing of the Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) and the New Party Sakigake.

Earlier in the day, Mr. Yamahana told his aides that he would officially leave the SDP Tuesday.

Despite the formation of the new bloc, Mr. Yamahana said he would continue to support the ruling coalition for the time being. "We will follow coalition's agreements and cooperate with the government of Murayama," Mr. Yamahana told reporters.

The SDP, which has been hit by minor defections in recent weeks, has not decided on whether to immediately expel the rebels, a party spokesman said.

But an irritated Murayama told reporters Monday that "it is difficult to accept a separate force within one party."

In an attempt to minimise the impact of the SDP split, Mr. Murayama met Finance Minister Masayoshi Takemura earlier in the day to discuss the possibility of boosting ties between the SDP and Mr. Takemura's Sakigake party.

"We would like to strengthen our relations with (Sakigake) ahead of the upcoming parliamentary session," Mr. Murayama was quoted by officials as telling Mr. Takemura during two-hour talks.

Balladur, supporters discuss candidacy

PARIS (Agencies) — French Prime Minister Edouard Balladur, the front-runner in the presidential elections who is expected to formally announce his candidacy this week, had breakfast Monday with seven ministers who have already backed him.

All, including Mr. Balladur, are members of the Rally for the Republic, the conservative party led by Paris Mayor Jacques Chirac. The ministers have backed Mr. Balladur over Mr. Chirac because they feel he was a better chance of winning.

They were Interior Minister Charles Pasqua; Budget Minister and government spokesman Nicolas Sarkozy; Cooperation Minister Bernard Debre; Environment Minister Michel Bernier; Labour Minister Michel Giraud; Overseas Territories Minister Dominique Perben and Higher Education Minister Francois Fillon.

Last week, Mr. Balladur discussed his candidacy in separate meetings with members of other conservative parties, including former President Valery Giscard d'Estaing and Charles Millon of the Union for French Democracy, former Prime Minister Raymond Barre and National Assembly Speaker Philippe Seguin.

Meanwhile French ultra-rightist Jean-Marie Le Pen launched his presidential campaign at the weekend, vowing to restore the guillotine and kick out millions of immigrants.

Mr. Le Pen, leader of the National Front, told a campaign rally Sunday that immigration and a falling birthrate had taken France "to the brink of the great disaster."

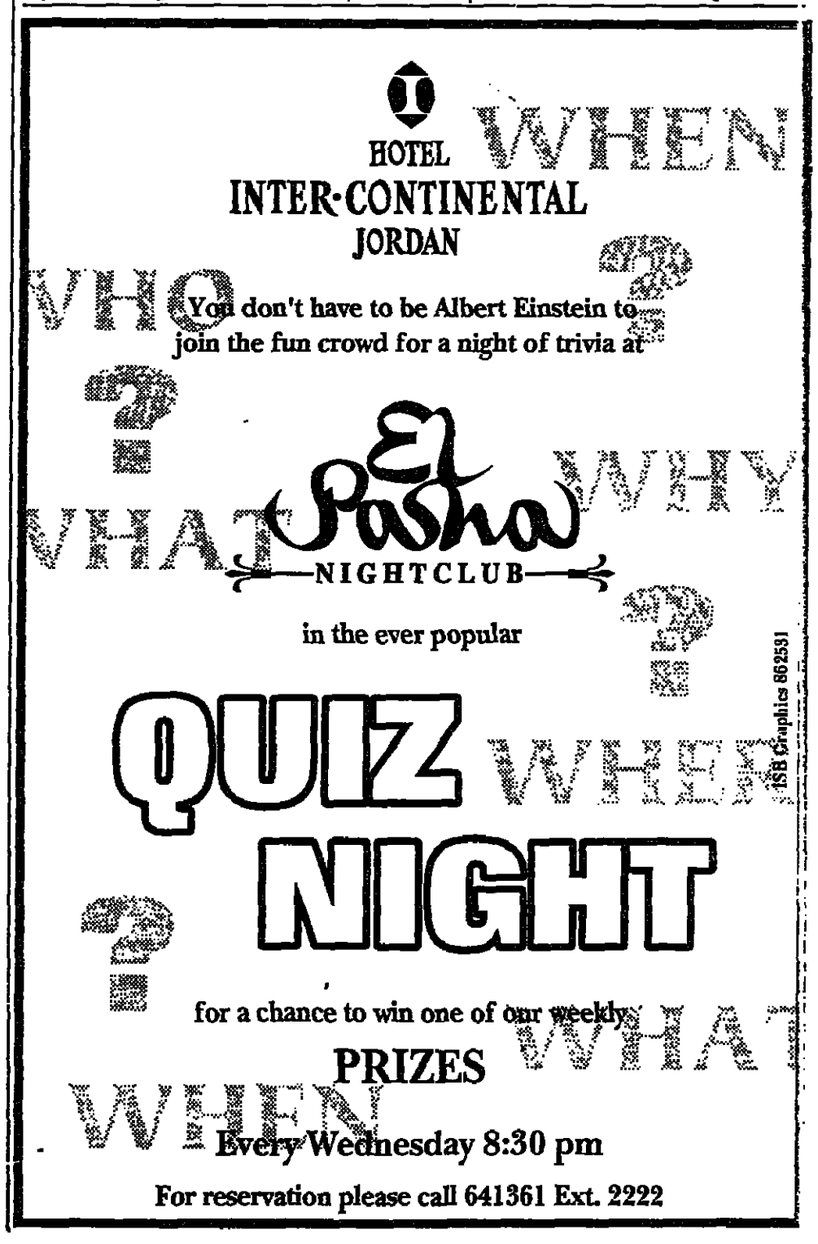
"I pledge to immediately end any immigration and send three million immigrants home," he told the rally in the central town of Tours, on a stage decorated to contrast a vanished, "belle epoque" with modern hamburgers and graffitti.

The 66-year-old former paratrooper won 14.6 per cent of the vote in the last presidential election in 1988 but this time he faces a challenge for the far-right vote from anti-Maastricht crusader Philippe De Villiers.

The latest survey at the weekend suggested Mr. Le Pen would poll no more than seven to eight per cent in the April 23 first round. But the National Front leader said he believed divisions on the left and among mainstream conservatives gave him a chance of reaching the run-off second ballot.

Mr. Le Pen blamed France's near record 12.6 per cent unemployment on European Union regulations, world trade liberalisation and mass immigration. Sending foreigners home would create four million jobs for French workers, he said.

Claiming that more children would be born to immigrants than to French people in 30 years' time, he proposed paying parents 6,000 francs ($1,100) a month to reverse the falling birthrate.



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Chairman of the Board of Directors:
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Director General:
MOHAMMAD AMAD

Editor-in-Chief:
GEORGE S. HAWATMEH

Editorial and advertising offices:
Jordan Press Foundation,
University Road, P.O. Box 6710, Amman, Jordan.
Telephones: 667171/6, 670141-4
Telex: 21497 ALRAI JO
Facsimile: 696183

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Hope in Rome accord

THE AGREEMENT of all the major Algerian opposition parties, including the Islamic Salvation Front (FIS), at the end of a meeting in Rome a few days ago to adopt a joint proposal for a ceasefire and transitional government bodes well for the ongoing efforts to end the bloodshed and civil strife in Algeria.

The Front of Socialist Forces and the Front for National Liberation, the other two parties enjoying a broad popular base, had repeatedly called on the FIS to forge a common strategy and adopt a united platform, in a bid to end the political conflict in Algeria. The Rome agreement signals the first time that the FIS has decided to join forces with other major political parties in a last-ditch effort to defuse the alarming situation in the country. Translated into real terms, this emerging consensus among the three major political factions means that the FIS no longer insists on enjoying a monopolistic power in determining the future of the country. The edging of the FIS closer to accepting a pluralistic stance on how best to tackle the formidable political, social and political problems in Algeria could be just the right panacea to resolving once and for all the turmoil even though the Algerian government has chosen to denounce even this trend.

Given the fact that France, Germany and Italy have all blessed the Rome meeting and Washington is already on record as favouring a political solution to the civil strife, the Algerian government's rejection of the Rome agreement may not be the last word on the subject. French Foreign Minister Alain Juppe may have summed up the position of the concerned Western countries when he told reporters last week that "only dialogue can enable Algeria to emerge from confrontation." Credit also goes to the Sant' Egidio Roman Catholic community for organising the get-together of the three main political groups which have a command of no less than 85 per cent of the Algerian electorate. Let us hope that this time the end of the conflict in Algeria is in sight after more than three years of bloody civil war that took the lives of many thousands of Algerians.

ARABIC PRESS COMMENTARIES

MAHMOUD RIMAWI, a writer in Al Ra'i Monday discussed the meeting in Morocco this week of the foreign ministers of Islamic countries grouped in the Jerusalem committee under the chairmanship of King Hassan II and said that it is inevitable for the committee members but to focus on the recent development's in the holy city. Mahmoud Rimawi said that Israel has been stepping up its attempts to Judaise the city through its settlement programmes and through driving the Arab population from their city by all means and kinds of pressures. The writer said that the Israelis continue their drive to present Arab Jerusalem as part of the Israeli capital, claiming that the Arab city has never been part of the West Bank. The 16-member Jerusalem Committee will no doubt focus on these serious issues and also on the suffering of the Arab population living there, said the writer.

MOHAMMAD KAWASH, a writer in Al Dustour, said that the expected meeting between His Majesty King *Hussein and Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak could* usher in a new phase in relations between the two Arab states. The meeting is expected to be a step in the right direction of starting the process of reconciliation among Arab states in the wake of the Gulf crisis and the subsequent strained relations, said the writer. It is also hoped that the meeting would give new impetus to the Arab League and its agencies to stimulate their joint Arab action, he continued. The writer said that the two leaders are no doubt troubled by the signs of disputes among Arab states and are no doubt determined to take steps that would *ensure solidarity and halt deterioration in inter-Arab* relations. The writer said that there is urgent need for the Arabs to come together and poor their resources to deal with the challenges focusing them.

The View from Fourth Circle

By Rami G. Khouri

Eggs, economy and other Arab indicators

EVERY YEAR around this time I take advantage of the publication of the Unified Arab Economic Report to assess the general economic conditions of the Arab World, and the statistics in this most useful report continue to reveal a troubling trend for our region since the early 1980s. Of course, combined figures for all the Arab states can be very misleading, alternately camouflaging progress or regression under the umbrella of the overall condition of our region. Nevertheless, I believe the exercise is a useful one, for it explains many of the political tensions and problems that continue to plague us.

The 1993 Unified Arab Economic report, which contains statistics up to 1992, is published jointly by three leading Arab institutions (the Arab Monetary Fund, the Arab Fund for Economic and Social Development, and the Organisation of Arab Petroleum Exporting countries).

It shows that total Arab gross national production (GNP) in current terms for 1992 was $479 billion (compared to $439 billion, the previous year and $440 billion in 1980). Total Arab population was 236 million in 1992, up from 230 million the previous year and 134 million in 1980. This means that per capita GNP, a popular but imperfect measure of living standards, increased from $1908 in 1991 to $2029 in 1992 — compared to $3283 in 1980, i.e. in the last 12 years, the average income of every single Arab person declined in current terms by $1254, or 38 per cent. If this is adjusted for inflation it becomes clear that the living standard of most Arabs has declined much more seriously.

One reason is that most Arab states have continued to carry large foreign debt burdens, forcing most governments to introduce stringent economic restructuring programmes that include currency devaluations, which in turn raise inflation rates and reduce the real purchasing power of the majority of families. Total Arab foreign debt in 1990 and 1991 remained unchanged at $156 billion, according to the published figures; experience indicates that the real debt figure is probably much higher than this, due to unpublished or disguised debts. The total Arab debt service (amount of principal and interest payable annually) declined from $17.7 billion to $16.7 billion.

Another positive sign was the decline in the total budget *deficits of Arab states from $65 billion in 1991 to $41 billion* in 1992, though $35 bilion of the total was in the Arab oil producing states that have been the dynamo of Arab economies since the mid-1970s. Total government budget deficits as a percentage of gross domestic product declined from 14.8 per cent in 1991 to 8.5 per cent in 1992, which is also a positive trend (though only on a slight longer term improvement over the 10.6 per cent level of 1988).

The tightening up in government deficits and spending is reflected in the fact that government budgets as a percentage of gross domestic prouct declined from 43 per cent in 1985 to 36 per cent in 1992. Government spending on defence and security remains unusually high, however, with this figure dropping only nominally in recent years, from 29 to 28 per cent of current expenditures in the period 1985 to 1992.

A continuing weakness of the Arab economy is Arab trade, most of which continues to take place outside the region. Total Arab foreign trade (imports and exports) increased from $247 billion to $258 billion from 1990 to 1992, but the percentage of total Arab foreign trade that takes place among the Arab states continues to decline. It went down from 8.5 per cent in 1991 to 7.3 per cent in 1992, *representing little change from the 7.6 per cent level of* 1985.

The ability of the Arab World to feed itself continues to be a problem area and a major economic drain. Total Arab agricultural imports in 1991 were worth $18.7 billion, compared to $20.6 billion in 1990, while Arab agricultural exports remained virtually unchanged in the same period at $4.83 billion and $4.76 billion. With the exception of eggs, the Arab region's self-reliance ratio for all major food groups has either declined or remained virtually unchanged in the last 20 years.

These figures suggest improvements in some areas and stagnation or decline in others, but the real trend in the region is not seen in such collective statistics. The real trend is that a small percentage of Arabs is living comfortably, while the majority is facing increasing difficulties.

These statistics do not show the increase in poverty and unemployment, for example. The budget deficits of many Arab states are declining, to be sure, but this comes at a very high social and political cost. Poverty and unemployment levels in our region now each routinely hover around the 15-20 per cent mark, in some cases reaching 25-30 per cent or more.

Though the average Arab per capita income may be just over $2000 in 1992, the reality is that about 10 per cent of Arabs have a per capita income of closer to $10,000 (the oil producers and their agents and partners in other Arab countries) while about 90 per cent of Arabs have a per capita income of closer to just $900. In other words, the majority of Arabs are poor, and they have been getting poorer in the last decade and a half.

If water shortages, quality of public services, dislocations due to rapid urbanisation, and very limited opportunities for political particiaption are also factored into the total, real quality of life equation of our region, the situation looks even more grim. It is no wonder, therefore, that political tensions remain high in most parts of the Arab World, political violence is common and more and more countries are trying to escape from this troubling trend by seeking funding and protection from foreign sources.

The publishers of the Arab Economic Report do us a great service by compililng these figures every year. Let us hope that more and more Arabs use them as a mirror in which to seek their condition and their direction.

Croatia's U.N. move caused by internal pressure

By Davor Huic
Reuters

ZAGREB — President Franjo Tudjman's decision to order United Nations troops out of Croatia was prompted more by mounting domestic pressures than by any clear strategy for resolving the problem of Serb rebels, analysts believe.

Mr. Tudjman gave notice on Thursday that the mandate of 12,000 U.N. peacekeepers deployed in Serb-held areas since 1992 would not be renewed when it expires at the end of March.

He said his country could no longer tolerate lack of progress in reintegrating the territories occupied by the Krajina Serbs after they rebelled against Croatia's declaration of independence from Yugoslavia.

Western diplomats and independent observers in Zagreb say Mr. Tudjman's move will almost certainly harm Croatia's relations with its main allies, the United States and Germany, and could lead to a new war with the Serbs.

"It is a real high-stakes poker game, a risky move which might have grave consequences for Croatia," a Western diplomat told Reuters.

"There is a danger of Croatia burning its bridges with the international community and we hope some kind of compromise can be achieved."

Despite the possible negative consequences of Mr. Tudjman's move, in practice he had no choice, given the Croatian parliament's insistence that the U.N. must go unless substantial progress in talks with the Serbs was achieved by Jan. 10.

Mr. Tudjman's ruling HDZ party has only a marginal majority in both houses of parliament, with many of its hardline members joining with the opposition in criticising the U.N.

"The domestic element was quite important," one diplomat said.

Zarko Puhovski, a university professor and political analyst, said Mr. Tudjman had to accommodate the hardliners in his own party.

The media had also whipped up a strong anti-U.N. mood among the public in general and among refugees from Serb-held areas in particular.

"Tudjman had to do this in order to stay in power, it is as simple as that," Mr. Puhovski said.

Mr. Tudjman also wanted to revive his party's waning popularity by fostering a mood of nationalism that would divert people's attention from Croatia's persistent economic problems.

Political analysts believe that the United States and Germany, the countries that have the most influence on Croatia, will put pressure on Mr. Tudjman to change his mind before *March 31, when the U.N.* mandate expires.

In his letter to U.N. Chief Boutros Ghali, Mr. Tudjman seemed to leave the door open for a possible U.N. redeployment on the basis of a new, redefined mandate which would satisfy some Croatian demands.

Croatia wants the U.N. to implement Security Council resolutions which call for the return of more than 300,000 Croatian refugees expelled by Serbs from Krajina, the disarming of the rebel Serb militia, and the establishent of Croatian control over all its borders with Bosnia and Serbia.

Serbs seized one third of Croatia with the support of the former Yugoslav army during the 1991 war that broke out when Serbs rebelled against Croatia's declaration of independence from Yugoslavia.

U.N. peacekeepers were then deployed in Serb-held areas, after a truce that ended six months of fighting that was an overture for a much bloodier Bosnian conflict.

Despite U.N. fears that the withdrawal of its troops could lead to a new war, military experts say Croatia is not preparing for a military intervention against the Krajina Serbs at the moment.

Mr. Tudjman hinted on Saturday that Croatia might use force in winning back occupied territory.

But most analysts believe that if there is any military action, it would be a limited raid designed to soften up the Serbs and bring them to the negotiating table.

Croatia wants to avoid a situation in which Serbia would intervene, which might happen if Zagreb launches a major attack.

Isolationism? Not yet, but Americans do seem angry at the world

By Jim Hoagland

WASHINGTON — Them: Is America going isolationist? Me: No. (Pause) At least, not yet.

That is the short version of conversations with foreign visitors to Washington and of telephone talks with friends and colleagues abroad. The question is old for them. The pause and the qualifying "not yet" are new for me.

For other nations, Washington is Omphalos on the Potomac, the global navel that foreigners contemplate to discern the meaning and direction of world politicis. The opening days of the Republican Revolution on Capitol Hill bring a tide of visitors from abroad with the I-word on their lips.

Fear of American isolationism always lurks near the surface in Europe and Asia. The conservative Republican takeover of Congress rekindles memories of the closed horizons of Smoot, Hawley, Taft and McCarthy. The world is anxiously taking the temperature of American internationalism, as it did two years ago when the governor of Arkansas was unexpectedly elected president.

Bill Clinton reassured America's political and economic partners in Europe, Asia and Latin America by getting behind NAFTA and GATT. But he and the Democrats got little if any credit for internationalism on Nov. 8. This is one of the *reasons for new tentative*ness in my sense of where American attitudes about the rest of the world are going.

The anger that American voters displayed in tossing incumbents out of the White House in 1992 and out of Congress in 1994 is not limited to politicians. In *impressionistic fashion*, opinion polls suggest that Americans are angry at the world — especially at the new global economy that seems for many to limit or endanger careers and living standards in the United States.

This "foul mood... is likely to last for a long time" and could lead to America being gripped by "instability as we careen from one oversimplistic solution to another," Daniel Yankelovich, America's premier public opinion analyst, told the National Civic League in a prescient *speech shortly after the* election.

Mr. Yankelovich argued that this result is not inevitable. A renewed commitment to community and national civic organisations could yet convert "the threat of class warfare and social instability into something far more positive and constructive." But his projection that a paralysing national instability is now possible will feed foreign fears that an internationalist America committed to world peace is a thing of the past.

Mr. Clinton's election was itself a sign that Americans felt a need to turn inward to fix the economy. Now, because of three trends that Mr. Yankelovich identifies, there is a danger that this benign turning inward could harden into a bitter xenophobia fueling active isolationism.

"The majority of Americans are failing to participate in the benefits of economic growth," Mr. Yankelovich warns. Growth is purchased by career-limiting, technology-driven downsizing and by "exporting jobs to Third World countries." He added: "The brutal reality is that in today's global economy employers can grow and be profitable by restructuring their operations to be less dependent on full-time, full-benefit employees."

A "contingent labour force" is emerging in an America that creates jobs (3.5 million last year) but not economic security. This happens as "important core values Americans share in common" grow weaker, the second trend that Mr. Yankelovich emphasises.

Traditional optimism is shrinking to a point where "the levels of American cynicism and resignation and shoulder-shrugging equal or even surpass those of world-weary Europeans."

Trend three: A growing disconection between this alienated public and the nation's politicians, experts, journalists and other professionals who treat the public at large as being stupid or "irrationally angry" for failing to appreciate that America has a growing economy.

"What drives people wild with *frustration is the lack* of responsiveness, a feeling of being ignored, misunderstood, exploited and played upon like a pack of fools," Mr. Yankelovich said.

I quote him at length because the dangers he cites seem to me to be increasingly dramatic and real. His analysis underlines that this era's problems are much bigger than the personalities and policies of Bill Clinton, Newt Gingrich and Bob Dole.

These three men, and their parties, must now hang together and respond to America's frustrations with real leadership. Otherwise they will hang separately in future elections in *which independent candi*dates will change the shape of American history.

The Republican congressional takeover is symptom, not cause, of an American flirtation with isolationism. Republicans need to be sensitive to the fears of the rest of the world about the uses to which they will put *their victory. Exploiting an*ger is cheap politics. Defusing or channeling it to constructive purposes is the art of leadership.

The Washington Post.

LETTERS

Drivers who do not obey laws

To the Editor:

IF NIETZSCHE was right about anything, it must be traffic in Jordan. Although there are laws that govern traffic, drivers choose to obey only those laws that suit them. In general, most drivers follow four rules of thumb. One, they avoid stopping their vehicles unless it is necessary, e.g., they have reached their destination. Two, they always remind themselves that they own the streets. Three, they never yield to anyone but expect everyone to yield to them. And four, they don't ever slow down for pedestrians.

The theory behind these rules of thumb is simple: For a driver to *survive, one must think that he or she is the* master of the streets. No matter what happens (accidents, property damage, reckless driving, or whatever), the "masters" must be confident that it is not their fault. Like department stores' customers around the world, drivers in Jordan must always feel that they are right. Moreover, if someone chooses to drive differently, the price one pays is rather high: losing the respect of their peers. To say the least, making such a choice and bearing its consequences is emotionally taxing. Unfortunately, in the end one cannot escape the conclusion that this popular theory and practice produce nothing but disasters.

Between traffic lights, it is normal to see cars passing each other from the right, changing lanes without a signal, pretending to turn, then go straight, and blocking the turn lane to go straight. On the wild side, one sees cars reversing on main streets, cars moving fast on the wrong side of the street, cars speeding at night without turning on their head lights and teenagers, with an overdose of hormones, speed testing their parents' cars in the alleys of Um Uthiana and Sweifieh. Because of these sad facts, pedestrians in Amman are generally running for their lives, but some, captivated by the idea that Allah and only Allah decides the time of their death, challenge aggressive drivers and cross the streets no matter what.

On traffic lights, although the streets appear a bit calmer, there are lots of activities. Children and young men sell a variety of goods: newspapers, American cigarettes, toothpicks, flowers and garbage bags just to mention few. If a driver refuses to buy anything, the sales representatives transform themselves into beggars. Here drivers find themselves torn between shopping or helping the needy; it is amazing how the problems of traffic and the problems of welfare are inter-connected in Jordan. When there is no shopping, drivers just stare at each other in silence to show their deep sense of solidarity. But the most popular activity on traffic lights is, without a doubt, cleaning: drivers of all ages and sizes use the time to improve their personal bygiene while others prefer to clean their cars. Traffic is a big mess.

Ayman Zanoun,
Amman.

The Jordan Times welcomes letters and contributions from its readers on any subject they wish to tackle. Letters intended for publication, however, should contain the writer's full name and preferably address as well. Names can be withheld only upon request and under special circumstances. Letters are subject to editing. The newspaper is not responsible for the return of unused manuscripts.

Feature

Arafat, Kabariti

(Continued from page 1)

...the resolution per se, ...that it took exception ...the inclusion of a refer... to Saudi Arabia while ...reference was made to ...itself.

...since then, however, Jor... and Egypt were reported ...have agreed on a new ...during talks Mr. ...held with Egyptian ...President Hosni Mubarak ...during a visit he paid to ...last week. Mr. Kabariti ...described the talks as highly ...successful.

Jordan has also been in ...with all member coun... of the 16-strong Jeru... Committee chaired by ... Hassan explaining that

House assails Gin...

(Continued from page 1)

...ask out Israel as a country ...ite we define what we ...as the capital should be..." ...Gingrich told Israel's ...Channel Two in a Washing... interview.

"It's the right of Israel to ...ose its capital and we as an ...a should in fact be respon..." Mr. Gingrich said. "So ...it comes to the floor this ...ess, I would be very suppor... of it."

A U.S. House of Repre...tatives *initiative* to move ...U.S. embassy in 1984 was ...ected by the Reagan admi...tration which feared it ...ould undermine efforts to

CBJ warns of forg...

(Continued from page 1)

In 1988, 20-dinar bills ...ccounted for 80 per cent ...of the JD880.7 million in ...Jordanian banknotes in cir...culation.

Monday's CBJ statement ...rged people to carefully ...examine the 20-dinar bank...notes in their possession ...and make sure that the ...main distinguishing marks ...appear on the bills, and are ...discernible, especially ...state colour, feel, size, ...metal line and other fea...tures are concerned.

...Asking the public to re...turn any suspected bill, the ...bank gave the following fe...atures as the differences ...between the genuine notes ...and the forgeries.

The forged note has a ...different touch and it is ...made of ordinary soft pap...er which is thicker than the ...genuine bill.

The size of the fake bill is ...slightly larger than the genuine ...bill in both width and ...length.

The pictures on the ...forgery is lighter in colour ...on both sides and its col...ours are generally different ...from the genuine bill. The

Saudi-Yemeni tens...

(Continued from page 1)

...Libération.

...Mr. Saleh told the French ...daily Le Monde in an inter... published on Monday ...that Yemen "won't go to ...war even if Saudi Arabia ...takes the initiative." He ...added: "We won't fight our ...brothers."

...The Saudi Press Agency ...said the two countries ...agreed late on Sunday on ...steps to defuse tension, in...cluding withdrawing troops ...that had been rushed to the ...border area.

...The Yemeni-Saudi agree...ment envisages "the return of ...their own countries' forces to ...their original positions before ...the start of the tension," a ...Yemeni diplomat in Riyadh ...said.

...But no timetable was given ...for the pull-back of troops ...from the border.

...The two sides have ...agreed to restore the situa...tion and not to resort to ...force," a Saudi-Yemeni ...statement said.

...Saudi Arabia and Yemen, ...while thanking Syria for its ...efforts, hope to resume bi...

Moscow offers talks ...

(Continued from page 1)

...besieged city to help re...cover the bodies of dead sol...diers, some of them lying ...uncollected in the open for ...days or weeks, as concern ...mounted about the possibility ...of epidemics breaking out.

...Sergei Shoygu, Russia's ...minister in charge of civil ...defence, emergency situa...tions and natural disasters, ...was given the task of direct...ing the rescue work, includ...ing recovering the bodies left ...untouched because of the ...heavy urban fighting.

...Witnesses said the Rus...sians sent salvo upon salvo of ...shells

Arafat, Kabariti hold talks

(Continued from page 1)

with the resolution per se, but that it took exception with the inclusion of a reference to Saudi Arabia while no reference was made to Jordan itself.

Since then, however, Jordan and Egypt were reported to have agreed on a new formula during talks Mr. Kabariti held with Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak and Foreign Minister Amr Musa during a visit he paid to Cairo last week. Mr. Kabariti described the talks as highly successful.

Jordan has also been in touch with all member countries of the 16-strong Jerusalem Committee chaired by King Hassan explaining that Amman's stand and insistence on maintaining its religious role in Jerusalem was not at variance with the Arab and Muslim approach that calls for Palestinian sovereignty over the Holy City.

The Kingdom has repeatedly affirmed that if it relinquishes its custodianship of the Islamic shrines in Jerusalem at this point in time it would only be creating a vacuum that the Israeli religious affairs ministry would exploit to further the Jewish state's efforts to create new realities on the ground and further its quest to Judaise the city.

Israel and the PLO are scheduled to discuss the status of Jerusalem only in 1996.

House assails Gingrich call

(Continued from page 1)

single out Israel as a country where we define what we think the capital should be," Mr. Gingrich told Israel's Channel Two in a Washington interview.

"It's the right of Israel to define its capital and we as an ally should in fact be responsive," Mr. Gingrich said. "So if it comes to the floor this year, I would be very supportive of it."

A U.S. House of Representatives initiative to move the U.S. embassy in 1984 was rejected by the Reagan administration which feared it would undermine efforts to broker Arab-Israeli peace. Mr. Gingrich said he had backed moving the embassy as early as 1980.

The Jerusalem Post reported Monday that the Israeli foreign ministry would begin preliminarily canvassing all foreign embassies this week to see how many of them would like to move to Jerusalem once final status negotiations with the Palestinians are concluded.

"We assume all the embassies will want to move to western Jerusalem once the final status negotiations with the Palestinians are worked out," a foreign ministry official told the Post.

CBJ warns of forged notes

(Continued from page 1)

In 1988, 20-dinar bills accounted for 80 per cent of the JD880.7 million in Jordanian banknotes in circulation.

Monday's CBJ statement urged people to carefully examine the 20-dinar banknotes in their possession and make sure that the main distinguishing marks appear on the bills, and are discernible, especially where colour, feel, size, metal line and other features are concerned.

Asking the public to report any suspected bill, the bank gave the following features as the differences between the genuine notes and the forgeries.

The forged note has a different touch and it is made of ordinary soft paper which is thicker than the genuine bill.

The size of the fake bill is far larger than the genuine bill in both width and length.

The pictures on the forgery is lighter in colour on both sides and its colours are generally different from the genuine bill. The genuine bill has very sharp features.

The King's picture in the water mark on the genuine bill becomes very clear when viewed against light, while it is not clear or does not exist in the forgery. The fake bill glows brilliantly under ultraviolet rays.

Marwan Al Alami, owner of the Alami Exchange Company, said his firm came across "six or seven" forged 20-dinar notes in 1994, but they were of the larger-size second issue of the bills that were in circulation before the third issue.

"It is easy to detect those forgeries because their quality is bad," Mr. Alami told the Jordan Times. "They all came from the West Bank, perhaps from people who saved their money in dinars for years without knowing some of the notes were forged."

Mr. Alami said he himself had not seen the fresh forgery but that there were "one or two cases" where employees in the firm had discovered the counterfeit.

Saudi-Yemeni tension defused

(Continued from page 1)

Mitterrand.

Mr. Saleh told the French daily Le Monde in an interview published on Monday that Yemen "won't go to war, even if Saudi Arabia took the initiative." He added: "We won't fight our brothers."

The Saudi Press Agency reported the two countries agreed late on Sunday on steps to defuse tension, including withdrawing troops who had been rushed to the border area.

The Yemeni-Saudi agreement envisages "the return of the two countries' forces to their original positions before the start of the tension," a Syrian diplomat in Riyadh said.

But no timetable was given for the pull-back of troops from the border.

"The two sides have agreed to restore the situation and not to resort to force," a Saudi-Yemeni statement said.

"Saudi Arabia and Yemen, while thanking Syria for its efforts, hope to resume bilateral discussions to settle the border issue and express their desire to spare no effort to make the talks succeed," it added.

A high-level Yemeni delegation, whose planned visit to Riyadh was postponed twice last week, were on Monday waiting for the green light from the Saudi authorities to visit the kingdom, according to sources in Sanaa.

The delegation, led by Parliamentary Speaker Sheikh Abdullah Al Ahmar, is to meet King Fahd and pave the way for a trip to Riyadh by Mr. Saleh.

Syrian Vice President Abdul Halim Khaddam and Foreign Minister Farouk Al Sharaa secured the breakthrough agreement after meeting Mr. Saleh in Sanaa on Friday and King Fahd in Riyadh on Sunday.

They handed the two leaders a message from Syrian President Hafez Al Assad.

Mr. Saleh also met with Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak in Cairo on Sunday in a bid to defuse the tension.

Moscow offers talks to Chechens

(Continued from page 1)

war-scarred city to help recover the bodies of dead soldiers, some of them lying uncollected in the open for days or weeks, as concern mounted about the possibility of epidemics breaking out.

Sergei Shoygu, Russia's minister in charge of civil defence, emergency situations and natural disasters, was given the task of directing the rescue work, including recovering the bodies left untouched because of the heavy urban fighting.

Witnesses said the Russians sent salvo upon salvo of shells and mortar bombs raining down on Grozny until 4 a.m. (0100 GMT) then broke off for two hours before resuming the barrage.

ITAR-TASS News Agency said a mortar bomb had exploded near a basement where elderly blind people were taking refuge and two old people were killed when they went in search of water.

About 12,000 Russian soldiers have been killed so far in the fighting for Chechenya, Mariam Chemaldinova Yandieva of the Russian human rights organisation Memorial said.

Bihar peasants are being trained to take up arms

Caste war blights India's poorest state

Guerrillas have vowed to protect the lower castes from ruthless landowners, writes **Tim McGirk**

FOR GENERATIONS, Ram Paswan's family of untouchables were victims of slavery. They were at the mercy of landlords in Bihar, a north Indian state. They did not dare complain when their sons were sold for 20 rupees, or when the upper-caste farmer summoned a Paswan girl to his house on the night of her wedding and raped her.

Finally, after the landowner cheated Ram Paswan, paying him one bundle of rice instead of five for three months' work in the rice paddies, Ram Paswan refused to take it any more.

"They're treating us like animals," shouted Paswan, a rangy man with a strong jaw, who stalked off from the landowner's fields, drawing a dozen other angry labourers with him. "They're using our wives and daughters for their own vices."

That night, several hundred landowners went after Ram Paswan to teach him a lesson. Armed with rifles, cutlasses and torches, they dragged Ram Paswan and his mother from their hunt out into the courtyard. He was made to watch as the Bhumiar caste farmers hacked to death his 65-year-old mother. "They cut my mother's breasts off. The bleeding wouldn't stop," Ram Paswan says, pulling off his shirt to reveal his own disfiguring wounds. "And they left me for dead."

The other villagers treated Ram Paswan's injuries and sneaked him to hospital in Patna. He remained in Bihar's capital for three years, nursing his wounds and a desire for revenge. This year, Ram Paswan came back to his village near the Ganges River, and he brought with him 40 rifles, ammunition, and several instructors from a radical group calling itself the Dalit Sena, Army of the Oppressed. They taught the peasants how to shoot and make home-made bombs.

"Since we've made it known that we are armed, the zamindar's — the landowners — have paid our wages and left our women alone," Ram Paswan says.

Every day, more Indians are dying in Bihar's caste feuds than in Kashmir. In New Delhi, the Indian capital, alarm is growing that the frenzy of caste violence in Bihar may spread to other neighbouring states.

These are revolutionary times in northern India. The Hindu caste hierarchy, which has been in place for over 2,500 years, is starting to crumble. Hindus believe that the inequalities of human existence are caused by one's deeds or misdeeds in a previous life. Four main castes are recognised, in descending order of importance: The Brahmins, who are the priests and writers; the Kshatriya, warriors and kings; the Vaishyas, the merchants and landowners; and Shudras, or labourers.

Below them are the outcastes, or Untouchables. They are despised as barabarians and made to perform such odious tasks as cleaning toilets, scavaging and burning corpses.

The Indian constitution bans discrimination based on untouchability, but according to one prominent U.S. scholar, Stanley Wolpert, "Brahminic 'purity" and ex-Untouchable 'impurity' remain the polar stars of India's social hierarchy." Within these four main castes are thousands of subcastes, often based on profession, clans and customs. Increasingly, the Untouchables — who prefer to be called Dalits or the Oppressed — are challenging the core of Hinduism: that only through resignation to fate can one hope for a better re-birth in a higher caste next time around.

A.K. Biswas is one of the few Dalits who has risen to the rank of Commissioner, overseeing 20 million people within his region of Bihar. He has fought prejudice every step of the way within the elite corps of the Indian Administrative Service. "This business of behave and you'll have a better incarnation is nothing but a ploy which has kept the Untouchables in their place," he said angrily.

"The caste system is worse than apartheid, because we face religious sanctions, too. Only now, after so many centuries, is the Untouchable daring to raise his head, to open his eyes a little."

What has happened in Ram Paswan's village in being duplicated all across Bihar. Three Maoist guerrilla groups have sprung up, ostensibly to defend the lower castes against the landowners. The Maoists now have hundreds of villages under their control in the central and western regions of Bihar. They hold Peoples' Courts out in the forests, chopping off hands or heads as they please. Often they prey on lorries roaring through Bihar on the Grand Trunk Road between Calcutta and Delhi. Their professed aim is to annihilate the upper castes, but often they were willing to spare a landowner's life for "a revolutionary tax" of 20,000 rupees and a good rifle.

In addition, the Dalit Sena's chief, Satyanand Sharma, claims he has provided crude, country-made guns to 1,800 peasant women. "So many atrocities are committed on women. They need to defend themselves," he says. Often the upper castes strike back. One village of Untouchables east of Patna was attacked last month by a band of 50 heavily-armed landowners. "We fought with everything we had," said one woman, Kailash Devi, 45, "Guns, bombs and stones. The children came out into the fields with us to fight. 'Why keep them in the house?' I said. 'Let them die with us, fighting.'"

After a two-hour gun battle, the upper-caste raiders were driven off. The Untouchables are afraid their oppressors will return, but in another village, 40 women trained by the Dalit Sena were able to fight off an armed attack by 300 upper-caste landowners who had wanted to punish them for owning guns.

The upper-caste landowners are also forming their own armies for protection. Travelling through the state, there were times when I thought I was witnessing an anarchy similar to that of the French Revolution, transported to a seemingly tranquil landscape of water, buffaloes, paddy fields and banyan trees.

Starting from Bodhgaya, I went with a politician from the upper-caste Bihar People's Party to Nawangarh, a village belonging to the Rajput warrior clan. Their village had been under siege from the Sunlight peasant's army — one of the three main Maoist groups — for over four years. The revolutionaries had cut off all electricity and telephone lines into Nawangarh, had stolen crops at harvest time, and had launched five frontal attacks on the village, each time with an army of over 3,000 men. When they need to leave for supplies or medical emergencies, the Rajputs load 20 gunmen on to a battered and many bullet-holded coach and shoot their way out of the village. During the last attack, said the village chieftain, Rana Jogeshwar Singh, the revolutionaries got to within 200 yards of the village: "We had to take up firing positions in the rice paddies." I asked why the police didn't come to their rescue.

"The police say the problem is out of their hands. There is no law here." Several months ago, when the Sunlight army attacked a nearby police station, it was the Rajput villagers who saved the police.

In Nawangarh, there were once 500 huts occupied by Untouchables who toiled in the Rajput's fields. Now over 200 Untouchables have joined the revolutionaries, and the upper-castes feel betrayed. "It's true that exploitation did exist in the time of our fathers and grandfathers, but we also gave them work, clothes and food. We are poor, too," said Amarendra Kumar Singh, a Rajput warrior, said.

It was getting dark. Cattleherders armed with rifles were bringing in the herds, and a dozen Rajputs were preparing for their night patrol by torchlight. "Their spies must know I'm here," said the politician. "We'd better go."

It was decided that two armed bodyguards was not enough, and a third rifleman crowded into the car. Safety catches were off, and their gun barrels poked out the window, ready for an ambush. I thought we were safe once we reached the main highway, but we soon pulled off on to a sideroad. Again, the guns were readied. "This time it's not Maoists, we have to worry about." Only bandits," laughed the politicians.

The caste war in Bihar has been building to its full ferocity over the past five years, ever since a lower caste politician, Laloo Prasad Yadav, became Bihar's chief minister. The Yadavs are primarily a community of cattleherders and dairy men. Many of the underprivileged communities voted for Mr. Yadav, hoping to break the upper caste's dominance.

However, the chief minister helped only his fellow Yadavs and trampled on the lower casts, heightening their frustration for social justice. A Patna sociologist, Professor Saibal Gupta, explained, "All castes now believe that the Yadavs have unleashed a reign of terror. They have to be checkmated."

The Independent

Nomads in an 'urban' world

The great Sudan famine of the mid-1980s displaced hundreds of thousands of farmers and pastoralists, driving them from the western provinces into urban feeding stations and squatter settlements. Today, it still reverberates at all levels of state and society. Here Louis Werner tells the story of one nomadic camel breeder and his family.

WITH THE Sudan's famine came social dislocation and political chaos. The long-time military leader, Jaafar Al Numeiri, fell from office. The ill-starred Sadiq Al Mahdi was freely elected and the still-ruling strong man, Lt. Gen. Omar Hassan Al Bashir, finally seized power.

Nomads and agriculturalists alike streamed cityward away from the jaws of the drought and death, an urban influx which dramatically changed the face of Greater Khartoum already flooded many times over with the war refugees from the south. This time round came Arabic-speaking Muslims — primarily of the Hamar and mutual exchange. They had never before experienced an urban environment and were totally unaccustomed to its ways of eking out a cash-based existence.

Families initially were often split in half by the migration — men taking their herds south in search of pasture, and women taking their children to relief centres in search of food. Camps at Abu Zayd and Mwellih near Umdurman filled with over 100,000 refugees in a matter of months. Camps at Ed Debba, on the Nile River's Nubian reach, filled with tribesmen desperate to sell sheep and goats weakening day by day.

One of the refugees to the capital district was Khair Allah Khair Al Sayyid Khair Allah, a fit man of 50 whose camel breeding livelihood was turned upside down by this natural disaster. The threat of drought-killed livestock forced him to liquidate everything in a market of distress sale-dampened prices. The carefully husbanded animal wealth that for generations had sustained his family in Dar Al Kababish, the tribal district surrounding Um Badr village, was wiped out in a single afternoon of pitiless auctioneering.

In 1985 Mr. Khair Allah moved his closest family members to the outskirts of Umdurman to a place called Suq Libya, named for the intended destination of would-be migrant workers lingering there for months in hope of being called up one day by labour brokers. Mr. Khair-Allah's windowless urban home, thrown together with woven reed mats for walls and ceiling over a sand floor, is a far cry from his expensive family quarters in Um Badr.

Strangers surrounded Mr. Khair Allah in Suq Libya. His wife rarely left their dwelling, less for modesty than the threat of theft. Petty pilferage, once considered an iron-clad tribal taboo, was common — food being the thieves' chief target. Hunger forced fellow tribesmen to break all the rules. But the denizens of Suq Libya were luckier than those of squatter settlements populated by southern war refugees, which had been bulldozed, moved miles into the desert without infrastructure of any kind, and given the Orwellian name "cities of peace."

Former government Commissioner for Refugees Abdul Rahman Al Bashir notes with regret the lost opportunities when Suq Libya's squatters were not encouraged to return to the western provinces immediately following the resumption of the rains. "All they needed then were a few goats and a wet she-camel to give them milk," he says. "But now they have forgotten those ways and might never want or need to relearn them."

Indeed it is a strange sight still to see tribeswomen brewing tea for milling sidewalk customers and tribesmen standing nightwatch over building sites for the urban well-to-do when just a few years ago they would have been herding their own camels from solitary encampments. Although many tribespeople remain in Umdurman, gleaning the city for coinage as they once scrounged the desert for firewood. Mr. Khair Allah among others has managed a partial return to ways of his ancestors.

The camel trade to Egypt was boosted in the drought years as tribal breeders sold their stock. The difference between what they would take and Cairene butchers would give made this an export trader's market. For the 40-day overland trip to Egypt, traders hired camel drivers. Those with experience and character were paid a premium and so Mr. Khair Allah, who in the past had occasionally made the trip, found steady employment as a Khabber, an Arabic word for 'expert' — known in the American slang of the Old West as a trail boss.

The irony of employing former subsistence nomads to create a cash economy linking Africa's largest city to Africa's most sparsely settled land was not lost on Mr. Khair Allah. He particularly regretted that export herds came to include more and more she-animals, the basis of his pastoralist life which, once depleted, takes decades to replace. But he could only laugh at the sight of mud brick masons, shopkeepers, and even Kuran teachers lining up for the chance to work under him as lowly trail drovers.

Often leading back-to-back camel drivers, away from home and utterly exhausted for months at a stretch. Mr. Khair Allah earned a good cash wage but at personal price. He left his wife in Suq Libya unprotected by the privacy of nomadic life and his aged father confined during his declining years in a porchless hovel set among strangers. They had access to countless market goods, but things once had for free — local transport, water, meat, cooking fuel — now had to be bought.

More recently, Mr. Khair Allah's fortune has again been buffeted by forces beyond his control. The current state of diplomatic unease between Egypt and Sudan has put the squeeze on the camel trade. Wage jobs on the trail are fewer and Mr. Khair Allah spends more time waiting in Suq Libya for word from the trader. Some savings remain but he is reluctant to start now to rebuild a personal herd. Another multi-year cycle of drought is on the horizon and his life as an urban squatter, now well established, provides more security in an unknown future.

People and the Planet

Jordan sees energy accord with Israel in few months

By Suleiman Al Khalidi
Reuter

AMMAN — Jordan said Monday it expected to reach an energy accord with Israel ahead of a deadline set in the peace treaty they signed on Oct. 26.

Fahkhruddin Daghestani, director general of the Natural Resources Authority, said negotiations on a detailed energy accord covering electricity interconnection and cooperation in earth sciences and natural resources were ahead of schedule.

"We have no major obstacles in the way of concluding an accord, progress has been made in the negotiations," Mr. Daghestani told Reuters in an interview.

Mr. Daghestani said the pact should be finalised within two to three months, contrary to Israeli reports that said the two sides already finalised a broad cooperation accord.

According to the treaty, the accord must be concluded within six months of the treaty's ratification in November.

A joint Jordanian-Israeli committee is scheduled to hold its fourth meeting in mid-February in Israel's town of Eilat.

Mr. Daghestani said work had already started on an electricity link to share power between the southern Red Sea port cities of Aqaba in Jordan and Eilat in Israel.

Experts say the line could be extended to cover Eilat's neighbour, the Egyptian see resort of Taba.

Mr. Daghestani said both agreed to gather data to identify possible locations for other electricity interconnections between the two countries after a 46-year state of war.

Jordan, with 40 billion tonnes of oil shale deposits, would also exchange data with Israel on research and development of renewable and alternate energy resources.

Joint studies on the geology and subsurface of the barren Jordan rift valley south of the Dead Sea to Aqaba will be conducted as soo as the accord is signed.

They are also exchanging ideas on promoting future cooperation on extending oil pipelines across their territory to promote regional links in a future post-peace era.

Jordan can play a link between Israel and Iraq, Saudi Arabia and other oil-rich Gulf states.

Israel has already discussed importing gas from Qatar and Egypt in the future with Gulf states exporting oil to Europe through pipelines across Israel's Mediterranean ports.

Foreign firms allowed

Meanwhile, an official source at the Natural Resources Authority was quoted in the Arabic daily Al Dustour as saying that setting up a national oil company does not mean it will have the concession to explore for oil and gas on all Jordan's territory without any competition. The source said it was possible for many foreign companies, in addition to the Jordanian company, to explore for oil in different regions at one time.

Iran to boost oil, gas reserves over 5 years

NICOSIA (R) — Iran plans to explore for more oil and gas to boost its giant reserves in the next five years, the Iranian news agency IRNA quoted an official as saying.

It quoted the oil ministry's director general of planning, Kazem Vaziri Hamaneh, as telling "Hamshahri" newspaper that one of the main goals of Iran's next five-year development plan, which starts in March 1995, was to find new oil and gas reserves.

He said that by the end of the plan about one billion barrels of crude oil would be added to Iran's crude reserves. Its proven reserves are now estimated at 90.5 billion barrels.

"Since gas is a clean and cheap source of energy, the project of expansion of South Pars gas field in three stages will be implemented during the second development plan," it quoted Mr. Vaziri-Hamaneh as saying.

He said that by putting the gas field into operation, about 24 million cubic metres (847.2 million cubic feet) of gas per day would be added to Iran's production capacity.

In September Iran awarded a $900 million contract to develop South Pars offshore gas field to a newly-established state-run Iranian company, Petroleum Development and Engineering Company.

Iran had said the field has an estimated capacity of three trillion cubic metres (100 trillion cubic feet).

Mr. Vaziri-Hamaneh said "Kangan" gas refinery with a capacity of about 80 million cubic metres (2.8 billion cubic feet) will be "completely put into operation in the following weeks."

He said the refinery's current production is 60 million cubic metres a day.

EU ministers set sights on jobs, growth

BRUSSELS (R) — European Union (EU) finance ministers, meeting against the unwelcome backdrop of turbulence in money markets, Monday set their sights on boosting economic growth and beating unemployment.

French Finance Minister Edmond Alphandery, who chaired the meeting, said his chief task for the next six months when France holds the EU presidency would be to bolster the accelerating economic recovery and make it generate more jobs.

He said public finance had to be brought under control and he hoped to conduct a full scale review of national budget deficits in June.

In a clear message to money markets that have attacked the Spanish peseta, Portuguese escudo and Italian lira in recent days, Mr. Alphandery added that economic convergence and budget deficits were appropriate matters to be discussed in public, if only in order to generate public understanding and confidence.

German Finance Minister Theo Waigel agreed with the French priority in battling unemployment.

"We must use the improved economic situation as quickly as we can in order to make inroads on unemployment," he told the open session at the start of the meeting.

He stressed the importance of maintaining stability and helping the recovery, and warned that Germany could not accept any softening of the economic convergence criteria.

"The recent tension in the European Monetary System shows that convergence is very important in terms of preparation for the final stage of economic and monetary union," he said.

"The federal government would oppose very strongly any moves to soften the stability criteria," he added.

Spanish Finance Minister Pedro Solbes, who earlier told reporters the peseta crisis was over, stressed that returning economic growth had to be used to benefit everyone.

"We all have to aim for growth, but it must be well balanced growth benefiting all sectors of our populations," he told the meeting.

Danish Economy Minister Marianne Jelved agreed. "The economic recovery should be used as the springboard for making the changes that are necessary," she said.

British Chancellor of the Exchequer Kenneth Clarke stressed that the fight against fraud had also to be boosted, partly in order to show citizens that the EU was value for money.

Belgian Finance Minister Philippe Maystadt called for full coordination of the fight to create more jobs, a view endorsed by new member Austria whose Finance Minister Goeran Persson urged joint action.

Economic Affairs Commissioner Henning Christophersen, who earlier told reporters that the tension in the exchange rate mechanism was not to be discussed at the meeting, urged the ministers not to relax in their actions to curb spending.

Growth rates were now back up to pre-recession levels, he said. "So it is now incumbent on political authorities to avoid making the same mistakes."

Arab Gulf countries voice concern over energy tax

MUSCAT (AFP) — Arab Gulf states Monday voiced their concerns over proposals by industrial countries to impose a carbon tax, saying it could undermine prices and create fresh supply crises.

The oil ministers of Kuwait, Qatar and Oman issued the warning at a major oil conference in Mucat, where more than 400 officials and experts from the region and other countries opened discussions Monday on the future of oil.

Abdul Mohsen Al Mudaij of Kuwait said consuming countries had a responsibility to stabilise the oil market to encourage producers to press ahead with projects to expand their output capacity and meet growing demand.

"They need to pursue policies which gives the producing countries confidence that oil will not be taxed excessively to the point of dampening demand since the producers need to have this confidence to plan their future capacity expansions," he told the Middle East Petroleum and Gas Conference.

"At the same time, such excessive taxation also acts as a barrier to trade and has a negative effect on the long-term stability of prices."

Omani Oil Minister Said Al Shanfari also voiced alarm about the carbon tax which he said would make further investment in the oil sector less attractive and block expansion plans.

Qatar's Energy and Industry Minister Abdallah Al Attiya said new energy taxes "constitute fresh pressure on oil prices," and called for a "new mechanism for prices."

The European Union (EU) has proposed the carbon tax as an environmental measure but oil producers have criticised it as an attempt by industrial nations to seek additional funds to tackle budget deficits.

A recent Gulf study said the tax, which could reach $10 a barrel by 2000, would cost the six Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) states around $17 billion by 2000 due to lower demand for their oil.

The study said cumulative losses by the 12-nation Organisation of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) would also reach more than $25 billion in real terms by 2000 and up to 1.9 million b/d.

"GCC states are expected to suffer most from this decline given their substantial additional production capacity, their distant geographical location from consumer markets and a tendency by the Europeans to meet their energy needs from outside the Gulf region," it said.

"Their total losses could reach $17.7 billion until the year 2000 in case the energy tax was enforced in the EU alone."

By 2000 the tax will push down output by Saudi Arabia and its five GCC partners by around 450,000 barrels per day (b/d) and their income for that year could drop by $3.4 billion if it is enforced by the EU alone, said the study.

If the tax is approved by all members of the Organisation of Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), which groups the EU with Japan and the United States, Gulf states will lose between 1.1 million and 1.4 million b/d in output.

GCC states — Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Bahrain, Oman, Qatar and the United Arab Emirates (UAE) — currently produce around 14 million b/d, more than half OPEC's output. The six members, which control over 40 per cent of the world's crude, will also provide the bulk of the global capacity increase.

Most of them have already launched costly projects to boost capacity to face demand and exploit their reserves, estimated at 470 billion barrels.

Saudi Arabia, the world's top crude producer and exporter, is increasing production capacity from 9.6 million b/d in 1993 to 10 million b/d at the end of 1995 and nearly 12 million b/d by 2000, close to its 1980 level.

Kuwait's capacity will rise to 3.5 million b/d in 2000 while the UAE's will exceed 3.2 million b/d, according to official figures.

Without the energy taxes, GCC oil exports are projected to grow by between one million and 1.5 million b/d annually until the year 2000.

GCC states have strongly attacked the EU proposal for a carbon tax saying it will have a negative effect on consumption and depress earnings, already down to a third of their 1981 level of around $180 billion.

The EU has defended the tax as a measure designed to protect the environment by containing the emission of carbon dioxide, which is blamed for global warming. But oil producers argue industrial countries are only seeking additional revenue to tackle their budget deficits.

The tax was supposed to be introduced in 1993, starting with $3 per each imported barrel of crude and rising gradually to $10 in 2000.

But objections by some EU members have blocked the proposal, leading to an understanding they could individually decide on the level of the duty.

"Apart from the environment, oil is linked to the concept of supply security, which has political proportions in industrial nations," the GCC study said. "So, producers are worried that environmental concerns could be a continuation of the so-called petrophobia."

Citing OPEC figures, it showed the group's earnings were projected at $198.6 billion in 2000 but would decline to $184.9 billion if the tax is enforced.

In 2010, they could plunge to $306.7 billion from $329.2 billion in 1992 prices.

Poor planning and red tape block aid flow to Vietnam

HANOI (Agencies) — Poor planning, bureaucracy and an unwieldy legal system have blocked the flow of all but a fraction of the foreign aid promised to boost Vietnam's economic reform programme, a report has said.

Red tape and archaic procedures have meant that only 10.5 per cent, or $400 million of the $3.82 billion pledged by foreign countries and financial institutions since 1991 has reached Vietnam, State Bank experts told the Vietnam Investment Review.

Infrastructure and construction projects — the main target of international aid packages — were being held up by drawn-out official procedures, it said.

A project aimed at upgrading the country's highway No. 5, which links Hanoi to the northern port city of Haiphong, was delayed for five months as officials dealt with the red tape involved in compensating and relocating people living along the route.

The same project ran into difficulties again last year, when a $30 million aid package from Taiwan was held up after donors discovered that no account had been set up into which to pay the funds.

The paper added that donors were wary of Vietnam's auditing procedures, prompting some foreign lenders to impose strict international-standard auditing conditions on loans.

Vietnam expects to receive between $500 and $600 million in overseas development aid this year and is attempting to overhaul the capital construction formalities in a bid to better manage the funds, it said.

Foreign financial institutions, including the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank, have also offered to train officials in financial management.

But one Western diplomat said some of the blame for hitches with the donors, who had not provided adequate explanations for administrative procedures that differ widely between countries.

Japan, Vietnam's top aid donor country with a total input of $1.216 billion, has complained publicly of the slow disbursement of aid, with one top official describing the situation as "very annoying."

The United Nations Development Programme warned ahead of November's donor conference in Paris that there was a "serious lag" between policy proposals and implementation that was hindering aid.

France is the second largest bilateral donor with $80 million. The World Bank, which resumed credits in 1993 following more than a decade of restrictions imposed by the United States, has loaned $900 million and the Asian Development Bank $532.5 million.

Vietnam is hoping for pledges of $10 billion in aid until the turn of the century to fund a new round of reforms that could clear away the debris of central planning and broaden the market economy, top investment officials have said.

Meanwhile, record imports forced Vietnam's trade deficit up to $900 million in 1994, from $200 million the previous year, according to official figures.

Exports grew marginally from $3 billion to $3.6 billion last year, while imports shot up from $3.2 billion up to $4.5 billion, the Courrier du Vietnam weekly said in its report of the figures.

Import growth was fuelled by requirements for raw materials and equipment for coal mines, cement factories, hydro-electric facilities and other infrastructure.

A boom in consumer spending and a torrent of foreign investment added to the rise.

According to the figures, fuel, iron and steel, pesticides and raw materials for textiles and chemicals were imported in the largest quantities.

Exports of crude oil remained the largest source of foreign exchange for Vietnam, reaching almost seven million tonnes, followed by textiles and fish and seafood (1.2 million tonnes), and coffee (140,000 tonnes).

HOROSCOPE

FORECAST FOR TUESDAY, JANUARY 17, 1995

By Thomas S. Pierson, Astrologer, Carroll Righter Foundation

GENERAL TENDENCIES: You will want to make the acquaintance of one you admire today and the Leo Moon trine Jupiter this morning or the moon trine Venus will help you achieve your goal this afternoon. Move ahead and have a definite plan for this evening.

ARIES: (March 21 to April 19) Morning is the best time to handle practical obligations and then tonight you can plan to make changes. Plan to add to your bank account.

TAURUS: (April 20 to May 20) Try to understand that stubborn person better and come to a fine understanding. Keep any promises you have made to your loved ones.

GEMINI: (May 21 to June 21) Get busy at tasks in the morning, then talk over plans with an associate, but don't make deal yet. Be sensible in your actions.

MOON CHILDREN: (June 22 to July 21) Some entertainment matter may go awry, so get busy and accomplish a good deal in some worthwhile endeavour.

LEO: (July 22 to August 21) Don't let a situation at home bother you too much and then get into new interests which can bring you greater abundance.

VIRGO: (August 22 to September 22) Get those difficult problems handled wisely in the morning, then be sure to go along with some family plan which has been suggested.

LIBRA: (September 23 to October 22) Study your monetary position in the morning and figure out how to improve it, then confide in those who can be of assistance to you.

SCORPIO: (October 23 to November 21) Find the best way of adding to your prosperity, since your present aims are not very good. Take care of that physical matter.

SAGITTARIUS: (November 22 to December 21) Early get rid of that private anxiety so that you can keep the promises you have made calmly. Think logically.

CAPRICORN: (December 22 to January 20) Work every angle possible to gain your aims today, then sit back and feel satisfied. Avoid one who is jealous of you.

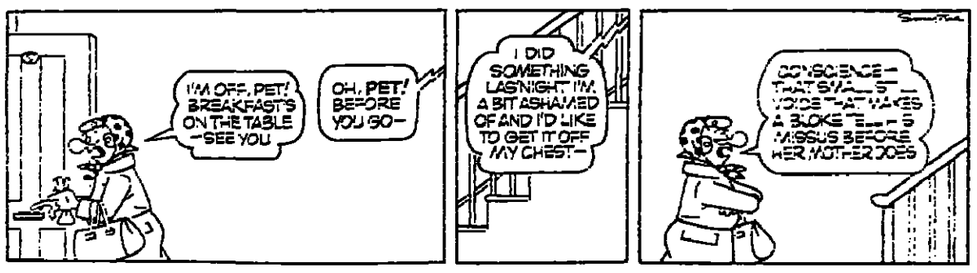
AQUARIUS: (January 21 to February 19) Begin the day properly by meeting the expectations of those in public office and then assist friends in some way.

PISCES: (February 20 to March 20) Some new activity needs further study before you get into it. Handle that outside duty which is important. Drive carefully on the highway.

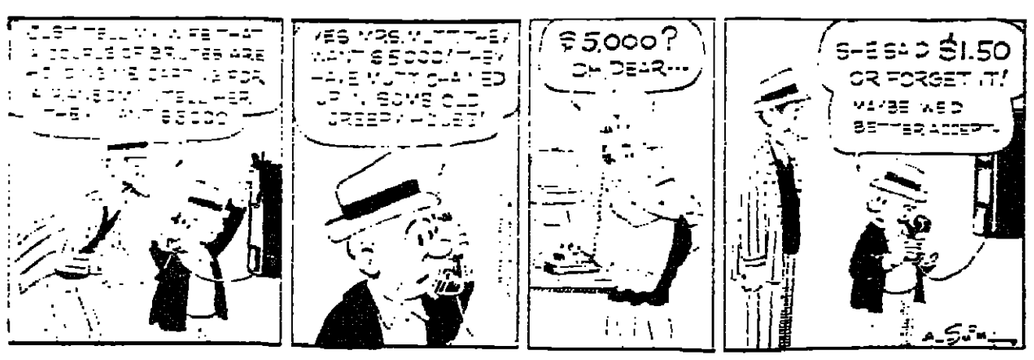
Birthstone of January: Garnet — Rose Quartz

Peanuts

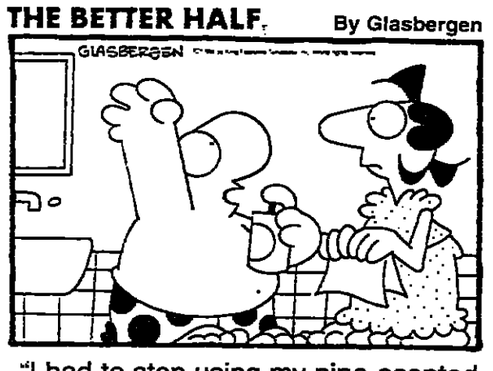
Andy Capp



Mutt'n'Jeff



THE BETTER HALF By Glasbergen



"I had to stop using my pine-scented underarm deodorant. It attracted termites and woodpeckers!"

JUMBLE THAT SCRAMBLED WORD GAME

by Henri Arnold and Mike Argirion

Unscramble these four Jumbles, one letter to each square, to form four ordinary words

DROLE

HASAW

POATIE

SYMFLE

Now arrange the circled letters to form the surprise answer, as suggested by the above cartoon.

Answer here: ( ) ( )

(Answers tomorrow)

Yesterday's Jumbles: BIPED NUTTY CIRCUS PAUPER
Answer: What the foreman wanted the carpenter to do — STEP IT UP

THE Daily Crossword by Virginia Yates

ACROSS
1 Bug-to-be
6 Whale group
9 Chicago team
13 With force
14 Adriatic port
15 Contingent
16 Hard-core folk
18 Uncivil
19 Uhs' kin
20 Refrain word
21 Scintillate
23 Shiver
25 — Claire, WI
26 Takes on
29 Speaks ill of
34 Piquant
35 Take the lead
36 Enter
37 Blind part
38 Pester
39 Thrall of old
40 Shot, for short
41 Toward the mouth
42 Composure
43 Wrong handle
45 Big headline
46 Shade
47 Cheers
49 MA college
53 Institute legal proceedings
54 Diamond stat
57 Answer of an accused to a charge
58 Handlers of mannonites
61 Patchy in color
62 Nobel prize chemist
63 Lag
64 Gratuities
65 Dr
66 "Ulalume" creator

DOWN
1 Work the docks
2 Cupid
3 Threadbare clothing
4 Ebullient energy
5 Science course
6 Funny thing
7 Part of B.A.
8 Get the word wrong
9 Grouches
10 "E pluribus —"
11 Wait
12 Young or old and
14 Slant
17 With 45D, loyal
22 Golf's Woosnam
23 Dolls
24 Arm of the sea
26 Burma neighbor
27 Fowl offering
28 In bridge, they can be grand
30 Homesteader's quest
31 Red dye
32 Hair job
33 Scornful look
35 Peeved
38 Down-to-earth
42 Artist's board
44 "— Town"
45 See 17D
48 Spot
49 Bus. date
50 1052
51 Unah —
52 Opportunity
54 Glean
55 Vivacity
56 Key
59 Church seat
60 Period

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Puzzle solved:

C	A	B	O	T		M	A	I	L	S		V	A	L
A	L	O	N	E		I	N	D	I	A		A	M	A
R	O	D	S	T	E	R	T	A	I	L		L	I	Z
	E	M	I	R	A	T	E			T	W	I	N	E
		D	A	S	H		H	A	I	R	D	O		
S	L	I	V	E	S	T		M	I	L	N	E		
P	O	I	E			H	E	N	P	E	C	K	E	D
E	C	T	O		S	O	N	E	S		K	I	T	E
C	H	I	C	K	P	E	A	S				N	A	A
		H	E	A	R	T		S	M	O	K	E	R	
C	I	R	E	E	T	S		T	I	E	R			
C	N	I	R	P			S	U	L	T	A	N	A	
K	A	I	F		S	H	U	T	T	L	E	C	O	C	K
O	I	N	E		T	E	N	E	T		O	L	D	I	E
W	A	N		O	M	A	N	I		R	E	E	D	Y

Cabinet approved

...on of diesel price dif... to trucks from ... Arabia, Lebanon, ... the United Arab ... Qatar and Oman ...cus of mutual agree... ...any other country ... be a party to a ... understanding will be ... the same treatment ...

...95 budgets of 20 ...ally-independent gov... ...departments total ...million (Al Dustour).

business daily beat

A review of economic news from the Arabic press

Jordan wins high mark from Wall Street

☆☆ Wall Street Journal ranked Jordan in the category of countries with a high degree of economic freedom. Out of 43 countries in the category, Hong Kong came in first place, South Korea ranked 13th, Greece 31st and Jordan was given the 39th slot. Israel ranked 10th out of 50 countries in the category of less economic freedom. In the category of no economic freedom, there were eight countries listed (Al Ra'i).

☆☆ Royal Jordanian started moving towards privatisation by selling its equity in the duty-free market and the Alia Gateway Hotel. The airline recently sold 50 per cent of its ownership of the duty-free market and 75 per cent of its stake in the hotel (Al Ra'i).

☆☆ The Ministry of Supply signed contracts with three land-transport companies to carry supplies and other goods from Aqaba to various destinations in the Kingdom. The contracts, signed with the Jordan-Syrian Transport Co., Jordan-Iraqi Transport Co. and the Union of Truck Owners, fixes the cost of transporting one tonne from Aqaba to the Juweideh (East of Amman) sitos at JD 8.850 and to the Irbid silos at JD 10.850. Transportation costs on a distance of less than 35 kilometres will be JD 1.350 per tonne (Al Ra'i).

☆☆ Any person insured by the Social Security Corporation (SSC) can apply for early retirement benefits if he/she has reached the age of 46 or more and has been insured by the SSC for 15 years. The SSC covers workers in 19 institutions, mostly banks, since Jan. 1, 1980 (Al Ra'i).

☆☆ Economist and columnist Fahed Fanek said in a recent lecture that Jordan's foreign debt was 120 per cent of the gross domestic product (GDP). He added that for the Kingdom to attract foreign investment, the debt should not exceed 75 per cent of the GDP (Al Aswaq).

☆☆ The Department of Customs is undergoing a comprehensive development process whereby computers are being introduced in various sections and efforts being exerted to simplify customs procedures (Al Dustour).

☆☆ The 1995 budget for the Aqaba Region Authority amounts to JD 9.5 million (Al Ra'i).

☆☆ Al Salah Contracting Establishment (Nabil Touqan and Company) will carry out the construction work for the Jordan Steel Plant at Al Hashimiyyeh-Zarqa. Jordan Steel is a public shareholding company with a large capital set up to produce all types of steel and iron needed for various purposes (Al Ra'i).

☆☆ Natural Resources Authority (NRA) Director Fakhreddin Al Daghestani denied there is an intention to privatise the NRA. He said the NRA had proposed setting up a national petroleum company to undertake drilling and exploring for oil. He added there was an intention to set up a company for mining (Sawt Al Shaab).

☆☆ The Cabinet approved exemption of diesel price differentials to trucks from Saudi Arabia, Lebanon, Bahrain, the United Arab Emirates, Qatar and Oman on the basis of mutual agreement. Any other country willing to be a party to a similar understanding will be offered the same treatment (Al Ra'i).

☆☆ The '95 budgets of 20 financially-independent government departments total JD 550 million (Al Dustour).

Singapore premier could become annual dollar millionaire

SINGAPORE (AFP) — Singapore Prime Minister Goh Chok Tong could eventually see his salary rise to 1.6 million dollars ($1.06 million) a year if recommendations by a government-appointed panel are adopted, a report has said.

The pay rise, recommended by an independent committee, would put Mr. Goh's salary at five times that of U.S. President Bill Clinton, who has to struggle by on $200,000.

The panel said in a report, compiled after studying tax data, that it was appropriate for Mr. Goh's salary to be jacked up from its present 1.15 million Singapore dollars a year to 1.46 million dollars in three years.

They recommended that it then be increased over an unspecified longer term to 1.6 million dollars because of the importance of his job.

"There is no comparable position in the country with the awesome responsibilities that the job carries. The country's future depends on the integrity of the prime minister," the report said.

Singapore's parliament in November approved large pay increases for ministers and senior civil servants to be phased in from later this year.

Financial Markets — Jordan Times in co-operation with Cairo Amman Bank

U.S. Dollar in International Markets

Currency	New York Close Date 13/1/95	Singapore Close Date 16/1/95
Sterling Pound*	1.5685	1.5685**
Deutsche Mark	1.5345	1.5339
Swiss Franc	1.2890	1.2925**
French Franc	5.2965	5.3050**
Japanese Yen	98.55	98.47
European Currency Unit	1.2540	1.2532**

* Units Per STG
** European Opening @ 8:00 a.m. GMT

Eurocurrency Interest Rates — Date: 16/1/1995

Currency	1 MTH	3 MTHS	6 MTHS	12 MTHS
U.S. Dollar	5.50	5.93	6.37	6.81
Sterling Pound	5.75	6.12	6.50	7.18
Deutsche Mark	4.68	4.81	5.06	5.56
Swiss Franc	3.56	3.75	4.06	4.37
French Franc	5.37	5.75	6.18	6.75
Japanese Yen	2.12	2.25	2.31	2.47
European Currency Unit	5.87	6.18	6.56	7.06

Interbank bid rates for amounts exceeding U.S. Dollars 1,000,000 or equivalent.

Precious Metals — Date: 16/1/1995

Metal	USD/Oz	JD/Gm*	Metal	USD/Oz	JD/Gm
Gold	378.25	7.50	Silver	4.80	0.110

* 24 Karat

Central Bank of Jordan Exchange Rate Bulletin — Date: 16/1/1995

Currency	Bid	Offer
U.S. Dollar	0.6970	0.6990
Sterling Pound	1.0921	1.0976
Deutsche Mark	0.4539	0.4562
Swiss Franc	0.5404	0.5431
French Franc	0.1315 *	0.1322
Japanese Yen*	0.7072	0.7107
Dutch Guilder	0.4049	0.4069
Swedish Krona	*****	*****
Italian Lira*	0.0435	0.0435
Belgian Franc	*****	*****

* Per 100

Other Currencies — Dates: 16/1/1995

Currency	Bid	Offer
Bahraini Dinar	1.8330	1.8450
Lebanese Lira*	0.041665	0.042725
Saudi Riyal	0.1852	0.1868
Kuwaiti Dinar	2.3150	2.3650
Qatari Riyal	0.1900	0.1915
Egyptian Pound	0.2000	0.2140
Omani Riyal	1.7980	1.8100
UAE Dirham	0.1880	0.1905
Greek Drachma*	0.2785	0.3150
Cypriot Pound	1.4075	1.5050

* Per 100

LONDON EXCHANGE RATES

LONDON (R) — Following are the buying and selling rates for leading world currencies and gold against the dollar at midsession on the London Foreign Exchange and bullion markets Monday.

U.S. $1.00 costs	1.4086/96	Canadian dollar
	1.5350/60	Deutschemarks
	1.7216/26	Dutch guilders
	1.2906/16	Swiss francs
	31.62/66	Belgian francs
	5.3060/10	French francs
	1605.0/6.0	Italian lire
	98.65/75	Japanese yen
	7.4700/00	Swedish crowns
	6.7130/80	Norwegian crowns
	6.0472/22	Danish crowns
One sterling	$1.5700/10	
One ounce of gold	$377.00/377.50	

UAE to have stock exchange this year

ABU DHABI (AFP) — The United Arab Emirates (UAE) will join other Gulf oil producers in opening an official stock exchange this year after more than a decade of planning, dealers have said.

Officials have visited Singapore and brought in experts from other countries to lay the groundwork for such a project, which will activate dealing and attract small investors scared away by manipulation, they said.

"According to our information, the base of such an exchange has been almost completed and the project will see light this year," one dealer said. "It will boost turnover as several banks and companies are increasing their capital and the government plans to privatise some of its institutions."

In press comments, the minister of state for financial and industrial affairs, Ahmad Al Tayer, has said there were enough trading institutions in the local market to warrant the establishment of an official floor.

He said the exchange, on the cards since 1982, would support government plans to boost the role of the private sector as part of reforms designed to invigorate the economy which has been hurt by low oil prices.

"There is a clear tendency to establish an exchange to boost national savings and open the door for the private sector to expand investment," Mr. Tayer said. "The market will make the UAE a key regional financial centre."

Around 77 banks and companies are eligible to trade their shares in the UAE, but less than 40 of them trade daily due to the absence of an official stock exchange and the lack of information about their performance.

Official figures showed their combined paid-up capital stood at around 14.5 billion dirhams ($3.95 billion) in 1993. This compares with their market capitalisation of around 37 billion dirhams ($10 billion).

Brokers attributed their high market capitalisation to a steady increase in share prices over the past few years due to their strong financial performance resulting mainly from a surge in credits to trade and construction.

Although the increase made the UAE market the second largest in the Gulf in terms of capital, its turnover has remained among the lowest, not exceeding one million dirhams ($272,000) a day, according to traders.

They blamed this on the absence of a formal floor, the high government ownership in trading institutions, restriction of share-dealing to nationals, and a tendency for long-term investment to secure a fixed income.

"The UAE market could see a big leap if authorities went ahead with privatisation plans and the bourse project this year," one dealer said. "Capital rises by banks and insurance firms will also contribute to this trend although many of them are securing funds from shareholders."

Several banks have raised their capital and others are expected to follow suit as per instructions by the central bank to strengthen their financial position and bring them in line with international adequacy standards.

Insurance firms will also start raising their capital soon under new guidelines by the economy and commerce ministry stipulating each company must have a capital of at least 50 million dirhams ($13.6 million).

The creation of an exchange in the UAE is also needed for plans by the six Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) states to link their bourses under their 1982 agreement to achieve economic integration.

Kuwait, Bahrain, Oman and Qatar already have floors while the remaining GCC member, Saudi Arabia, shut its bourse eight years ago due to Muslim religious opposition.

But Saudi dealing is now conducted through the most sophisticated bank network in the Middle East and turnover has remained the highest.

AMMAN FINANCIAL MARKET
HOUSING BANK CENTER AMMAN - SHMEISANI
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ORGANIZED MARKET SHARE PRICE LIST FOR MONDAY 16/01/1995

COMPANY'S NAME	NO. OF SHARES TRADED	VALUE TRADED JD	PREV. CLOSING PRICE	CLOSING PRICE
ARAB BANK	560	102551	183.250	183.200
JORDAN NATIONAL BANK	28150	118517	4.230	4.210
JORDAN NATIONAL BANK / NEW	7968	33234	4.150	4.170
BANK OF JORDAN	28250	104525	3.720	3.700
MIDDLE EAST INVESTMENT BANK.	2700	4071	1.530	1.520
INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT BANK	1187	3420	2.850	2.890
THE HOUSING BANK	3150	18353	5.870	5.850
JORDAN KUWAIT BANK	9627	29263	3.030	3.040
JORDAN GULF BANK	8550	13173	1.540	1.560
JORDAN ISLAMIC BANK	17316	64758	3.680	3.760
JORDAN INVESTMENT & FINANCE BANK	3550	15525	4.380	4.360
AMMAN BANK FOR INVESTMENT	76450	113642	1.500	1.470
ARAB BANKING CORPORATION/JORDAN	518	2132	4.150	4.120
PHILADELPHIA INVESTMENT BANK.	3400	5477	1.620	1.620
BANKS SECTOR	191390	628708	INDEX NUMBER: 158.18 CHANGE : +0.05%	
JORDAN FRENCH INSURANCE	2400	5812	2.440	2.420
HOLY LAND INSURANCE	950	2375	2.500	2.500
THE NATIONAL AHLIA INSURANCE	180	556	3.250	3.090
INSURANCE SECTOR	3530	8743	INDEX NUMBER: 136.58 CHANGE : -0.52%	
JORDANIAN ELECTRIC POWER	69530	107769	1.540	1.550
JORDANIAN ELECTRIC POWER /NEW	9950	14862	1.500	1.500
JORDAN HIMEH MINERAL	773	2087	2.700	2.700
ARAB INTERNATIONAL HOTELS	3550	17040	4.800	4.800
NATIONAL PORTFOLIO SECURITIES	667	1486	2.230	2.240
JORDAN GULF REAL ESTATE INVESTMENT	525	657	1.250	1.260
JORDAN PRESS FOUNDATION / ALRA'I	550	6875	12.350	12.500
UNITED MIDDLE EAST & COMMODORE HOTELS	6711	16131	2.400	2.400
ARAB INTER. FOR INVESTMENT & EDUCATION	1250	4350	3.490	3.480
JORDANIAN EXPATRIATES INVESTMENT HOLDING	500	690	1.450	1.380
SERVICES SECTOR	94006	171946	INDEX NUMBER: 131.61 CHANGE : +0.25%	
THE JORDAN CEMENT FACTORIES	11810	34813	2.940	2.960
JORDAN PETROLEUM REFINARY	1186	11432	9.640	9.640
THE JORDAN WORSTED MILLS	1250	9683	7.600	7.750
ARAB PHARMACEUTICAL MANUFACTURING	4607	25144	5.380	5.500
JORDAN CERAMIC INDUSTRIES	225	1393	6.200	6.200
JORDAN DAIRY	60	140	2.350	2.350
THE JORDAN PIPES MANUFACTURING	50	138	2.750	2.750
JORDAN PAPER & CARDBOARD FACTORIES	560	2344	4.300	4.200
THE PUBLIC MINING	250	738	3.000	2.950
RAFIA INDUSTRIES	980	2490	2.740	2.750
DAR AL DAWA DEVELOPMENT & INVESTMENT	638	10472	16.200	16.410
ARAB INVESTMENT & INERNATIONAL TRADE	7200	7307	1.010	1.020
ARAB ALUMINIUM INDUSTRY	1150	8050	6.950	7.000
LIVESTOCK & POULTRY	152872	131364	.840	.870
ARAB PAPER CONVERTING & TRADING	650	913	1.390	1.410
NATIONAL STEEL INDUSTRY	800	3344	4.140	4.180
JORDAN ROCKWOOL INDUSTRIES	250	375	1.500	1.500
JORDAN INDUSTRIES & MATCH/JIMCO	2700	2190	.810	.820
JORDAN SULPHO-CHEMICALS	1050	1995	1.900	1.900
ARAB CENTER FOR PHARM. & CHEMICALS	1450	3833	2.680	2.630
KAWTHER INVESTMENT	500	900	1.800	1.800
UNIVERSAL MODERN INDUSTRIES	1400	5805	4.140	4.140
JORDAN INDUSTRIAL RESOURCES CO.	10885	22659	2.010	2.100
INDUSTRIAL SECTOR	202599	288214	INDEX NUMBER: 128.21 CHANGE : +0.59%	
GRAND TOTAL	491525	1097610	INDEX NUMBER: 143.81 CHANGE : +0.24%	

U.S. firms strike ten deals for $1.4b in India

NEW DELHI (R) — American companies signed 10 deals worth $1.4 billion Monday as India assured U.S. Commerce Secretary Ron Brown that it would press on with free-market reforms despite electoral setback for the ruling party.

But U.S. executive complained that India had not done enough to lower tariffs and open its markets, and Mr. Brown said there were worries about India's cumbersome regulations.

The power, telecommunications and financial-services deals were the first concrete results from Mr. Brown's five-day trade and investment mission to India, considered one of the 10 most promising markets by the U.S. administration.

The biggest agreement, a $920 million power plant built by the Enron Corporation, had previously been announced, but Enron clinched almost $400 million in financing in New Delhi. Earlier, an Enron executive had said it would get $500 million.

A $400 million pact was signed between Mission Energy, a unit of the American Scecorp, and India's Tata Iron and Steel to build a 300 megawatt power station in the eastern state of Bihar.

U.S. West signed a $100 million deal to set up India's first private telecommunications service.

American International Group (AIG) agreed with the Tata group to enter the Indian insurance and financial services markets, currently jealously guarded by the Indian government.

Other deals were expected Tuesday, including the sale of two Boeing 747-400 jets to Air India in a deal worth more than $350 million and a $160 million investment by Soros Fund Management in a distillate refinery in eastern India.

AES Transpower executive were working fervishly to try to clinch financial guarantees on a $630 million, 420 megawatt coal-fired power plant in the eastern state of Orissa.

"We have just begun to scratch the surface," Mr. Brown said after witnessing the signings.

The United States is India's biggest trade and investment partner but recognises that competition for a marketing hold in the second most populous nation in heating up.

Commerce Minister Pranab Mukherjee and Mr. Brown signed a pact setting up the U.S.-India Commercial Alliance, which will bring government officials and companies together to boost business ties.

Mr. Mukherjee assured Mr. Brown and more than two dozen U.S. business executives that Prime Minister P.V. Narasimha Rao would pres on with liberalisation. "The reform process will continue and get further momentum as it moves on," Mr. Mukherjee said.

JORDAN MARKET PLACE

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Australian Open

Sampras, Stich breeze through

MELBOURNE (AFP) — Pete Sampras pinpointed the major threat to his world number one ranking Monday — not Andre Agassi or Boris Becker, but... injury.

Sampras, who breezed into the second round of the Australian Open Monday by brushing aside Italian left-hander Gianluca Pozzi 6-3, 6-2, 6-0, said: "Injuries definitely hurt me more than anything last year."

Sampras, whose year was plagued by tendinitis and hamstring problems, added: "If I can stay healthy and play the tennis I have played the last couple of years, then I can stay on top for as long as I can."

Sampras, who plays Slovak Republic qualifier Jan Kroslak in the next round, has been world number one for almost two years — 90 weeks — but Agassi produced a late surge to win the U.S. Open on the way to the number two ranking while Becker also made a major comeback.

Sampras, however, holds a massive 1,696-point break over Agassi and, in his own words, was unbeatable in the first half of 1994, winning eight of his 10 titles.

While Agassi and Becker sat on the sidelines on Monday, Jim Courier kicked off 1995 in far better spirits than this time last year.

The two-times winner, whose ranking slumped to 13 after a title-less 1994, cruised past David Rikl of the Czech Republic, winning 6-4, 6-0, 7-6 (7/2) in 97 minutes to set up a second round meeting with Italian Cristiano Caratti.

"I have to go to the beach more often.. in Adelaide (last week) I played some golf, went to the casino and had a lot of fun... that's what I need to do to stay fresh.

"I want to allow myself to enjoy the life that I have, because it's a good one," said Courier.

Former Wimbledon champion Michael Stich, meanwhile, erased the memories of his 1994 first-round demise to MaliVai Washington with a comfortable straight-sets win over another American Jeff Tarango.

Stich, the second seed last year but ranked No. 7 this time, crushed the Californian 6-3, 6-1, 6-3 in minutes.

Michael Chang met unexpected resistance before subduing Australian wild card Paul Kilderry 6-2, 6-4, 5-7, 6-2 and Ukraine's Andrei Medvedev, the 13th seed, eliminated India's Leander Paes, 6-1, 7-5, 7-6 (7/4).

Sixth seed Stefan Edberg, a two-time winner here, wore down big-serving Australian youngster Mark Philippoussis to launch his Australian Open tennis.

The veteran Swede took almost two-and-a-half hours to fight off the 18-year-old wild card 4-6, 6-3, 7-6 (7/1), 7-5 and set up a second round encounter with Romanian qualifier Adrian Voinea.

Swede Magnus Larsson, who beat Stefan Edberg, Agassi, Todd Martin and Sampras to win the Grand Slam Cup in Munich last November, put out American qualifier Brian MacPhie in straight sets, the first two tiebreakers.

The fourth seed, Mary Pierce of France, snuffed out 95th-ranked Slovenian Tina Krizan, 6-1, 6-0, No. 8 Natasha Zvereva of Belarus defeated France's Alexandra Fusai, 6-4, 6-0 and Germany's Anke Huber saw off Ludmila Richterova of the Czech Republic 6-2, 6-4.

MaliVai Washington

Martina Hingis

14-year-old Hingis makes auspicious Grand Slam debut

MELBOURNE (R) — Swiss prodigy Martina Hingis made a nerveless Grand Slam debut Monday as she breezed past another milestone in her young career against an opponent almost twice her age.

Hingis, just 14 and taking her first steps along the uncertain road most recently trodden by Jennifer Capriati, beat California Jolene Watanabe 6-0 7-6 to become the youngest winner of a main draw match at the tournament in the open era.

By denying her opponent a game in the opening set, in which she dropped just 11 points, she also joined some distinguished company including Boris Becker, who won both his opening sets to love on his Wimbledon debut in 1984.

Hingis outdid Becker's fellow German Steffi Graf, who fell in the first round of her initial Grand Slam in 1983.

Hingis, dubbed "little Martina" on her entrance to the women's tour in Zurich last October, was named after the legendary Martina Navratilova and clearly shares the same desire to win.

On court, however, she is cool and graceful in the Chris Evert mould and is already assembling a career record which may soon justify such comparisons.

Last week she took world number seven Lindsay Davenport to three sets in Sydney and her first performance at Flinders Park delighted the large crowd that flocked to court one.

Watanabe, 12 years older than Hingis, did not help her cause with some unforced errors on a windy afternoon, but was still not prepared to start the second set without a game to her name after just 20 minutes on court.

It was then time for Hingis to demonstrate her competitive side as she recovered from 5-3 down to save two set points and force a tie-break, which she calmly took 7-2.

Afterwards, the happy newcomer confirmed she had felt no pre-match anxiety "because she is behind me in the rankings."

Asked if she now felt at home amongst the seniors, the French and Wimbledon junior champion appeared taken aback.

"I am a regular player on the tour," she replied through an interpreter. "I will not play any more junior tournaments."

Hingis singled out her serve and her forehand as areas of her game which needed attention.

But she had already delivered a perfect answer to the woman in the first-day crowd whose T-shirt read "I miss Martina". If one famous career is indeed over, another is just beginning.

Italian, Spanish leaders revel in summit clashes

PARIS (AFP) — Spanish leaders Real Madrid and Italian frontrunners Juventus kept championship hopes alive at weekend while Nantes looked invincible in France.

In a week of top of the table clashes, Juventus took a step closer to their first title since 1986 with Fabrizio Ravanelli scoring two goals for the second weekend in a row.

Three players were sent off but the home side still demolished their rivals AS Roma 3-0 without the help of injured Roberto Baggio.

Juventus, on 36 points and with a game in hand, now stand four points ahead of Parma, the side they knocked off the top of the table a week earlier and who scraped a 1-1 draw at Fiorentina.

Roma dropped back to fourth as Lazio thrashed Foggia 7-1 to go third.

Ravanelli, who scored twice for Juventus against Parma, this time netted in the 32nd minute before adding a penalty with eight minutes to go. Veteran Gianluca Vialli put the seal on the win with a goal in the 86th.

Juventus defender Torricelli and opposing goalkeeper Cervone were sent off after a clash on 71 minutes and Roma's Petruzzi followed with 10 minutes to go.

Lazio's goal spree included an Alen Boksic second-half hat-trick and four goals in the last five minutes.

Foggia had reached the half-way stage on level terms before former Olympique Marseille player Boksic began the rout in the 48th and 52nd minutes.

Giuseppe Signori also cashed in with two goals, scoring his second five minutes from the final whistle with Croatian Boksic (88th), Casiraghi (89th) and Fuser (90th) joining in the party.

Parma, hampered by the absence of four top players including Faustino Asprilla — facing a firearms charge back in Colombia — ran into top Serie A marksman Gabriel Batistuta as early as the ninth minute.

The Argentinian striker, back after taking part in the Intercontinental Cup in Saudia Arabia, notched his 15th goal of the season but Gabriele Pin earned a point just after the break.

In Spain, Real Madrid strengthened their grip on the Spanish League in the wake of last week's 5-0 destruction of Barcelona.

They extended their lead at the top of the first division by three points taking a point and a goalless draw from their away trip to rivals Deportivo La Coruna.

Chilean striker Ivan Zamorano, the butcher of Barcelona, nearly connected with a dangerous cross from Jose Emilio Amavisca in the 35th minute to stretch his load as Spain's top goalscorer with 17 this season.

It was Zamorano who scored three goals and made both the others in the 5-0 win against Barcelona.

Deportivo came back in the second half, but Real goalkeeper Francisco Buyo was equal to the challenge from Brazilian ace Bebeto and Javier Manjarin.

Zaragoza lost their chance to close the *gap* with the leaders and slipped into third place, beaten 2-1 at Sevilla, who gave Romania striker Ilie Dumitrescu, on loan from Tottenham Hotspur, his first game in attack.

Barcelona beat bottom club Logrones 3-0 to stay in fourth place. They did so without Romario, back in Brazil to play for Flamengo, and suspended Hristo Stoichkov.

They fielded a new-look attack in the shape of Russian international Igor Korneyev and Jordi Cruyff, who scored in the 81st minute.

SOCCER ROUNDUP

In a midweek summit clash in France, league leaders Nantes beat champions Paris St. Germain 3-0.

Nantes, unbeaten this season, go 10 points clear at the top of the table and destroyed another milestone in doing so. They were the first side to win at the Parc Des Princes in Paris in more than two years.

Patrice Loko scored in the first half and Japhet N'Doram added two after the break.

Paris had their backs to the wall after 24 minutes when midfielder Daniel Bravo was sent off for a dangerous tackle on N'Doram. In the closing minutes, Patrick Colleter added to PSG's dreary showing by being sent off for dissent.

In London, defending champions Manchester United were held to a 1-1 draw at Newcastle in the English Premier League Sunday and failed to make up ground on leaders Blackburn who are now five points clear at the top.

Welsh international Mark Hughes, whose future with United has been called into question by the record signing from Newcastle of striker Andy Cole, put the title-holders in front after 13 minutes but injured himself in the process and was carried off on a stretcher.

Paul Kitson softened the impact of Cole's departure for Newcastle fans by scoring an excellent equaliser for the home side after 67 minutes which earned a deserved share of the points.

Cole, signed last Tuesday in a deal worth a British record seven million pounds sterling ($10.94 million), did not play against his old club.

Blackburn, who have a game in hand over United, strengthened their title bid with a 3-0 home win over Nottingham Forest.

Black backs calls for release of negative tests

LONDON (R) — Twice European 400 metres champion Roger Black conceded Monday that a drug cloud hung over British athletics and backed calls for the publication of negative tests.

"We can't pretend there's not a problem," Black told a news conference called to announce a new sponsorship deal for the British Athletic Federation (BAF).

"There's a cloud hanging over athletics. You can't blame the public, there's probably more suspicion than there has ever been before."

Last August shot putter Paul Edwards and defending women's 800 metres champion Diane Modahl were sent home early from the Victoria Commonwealth Games after results of positive drugs tests had been confirmed.

Both athletes have been suspended for four years although Modahl has appealed to the BAF against her ban which followed a positive test for excessive amounts of the male hormone testosterone at a meeting in Lisbon on June 18. No date for the appeal has yet been set.

Black, who finished second in last year's European Championships after winning gold in 1986 and again in 1990, said he supported moves to release the results of negative tests.

"Why not?," he said. "I don't see any downside. It's natural for the public to want to see that Roger Black was tested and that (Olympic and world 100 metres champion) Linford Christie was tested.

"I had five drugs tests last year and I was never told they were negative. Every time you take a test you are worried.

"It's a worry for the athlete and I think it should be addressed."

Black said, however, he was convinced most British athletes did not take drugs.

"I believe that the vast majority of British athletes don't take drugs," he said. "I really do believe it."

BAF spokesman Tony Ward said he personally felt releasing the results of all drugs tests every three months would be a major step forward.

"It really should be part of the procedure," he said. "But we'd better wait until the Modahl case is out of the way before we take any more initiatives."

David Heslop, managing director of the Mazda U.K. car firm who announced at the news conference that they would inject £500,000 ($780,000) into British athletics over the next three years, admitted the company had looked at the drugs problem in athletics.

GOREN BRIDGE

WITH OMAR SHARIF & TANNAH HIRSCH

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AVOID THOSE TROUBLES

Both vulnerable. North deals.

NORTH
♠ A J 10 6
♡ A 10 4 2
♢ 7 5 3
♣ 6 2

WEST
♠ 3
♡ Q J 9 8
♢ K 10 8 6
♣ Q 9 7 4

EAST
♠ 9 4
♡ K 7 5
♢ J 9 2
♣ K 10 8 5 3

SOUTH
♠ K Q 8 7 6 2
♡ 6 3
♢ A Q 4
♣ A J

North	East	South	West
Pass	Pass	1 ♠	Pass
3 ♠	Pass	4 ♠	Pass
Pass	Pass		

Opening lead: Queen of ♡

The average player, when in search of tricks, often looks no further than a finesse. The expert seeks ways to avoid one. The difference in philosophies can produce spectacularly divergent approaches.

North's hand improved considerably after South opened one spade, and the invitational jump raise was fully merited. South had a fair amount in reserve for proceeding to game.

West led the queen of hearts and declarer was quite happy with dummy. There were nine fast tricks available and South, a fair player, saw that a successful diamond finesse would deliver the fulfilling trick. After taking the ace of hearts and drawing trumps, ending on the table, a diamond to the queen lost to the king. Declarer eventually lost another diamond, a heart and a club for down one.

Better technique could have produced an almost sure-trick line for the contract. That can be done via an endplay and to accomplish it East must be kept off lead to prevent a diamond being pushed through the major tenace in declarer's hand.

The first step is to allow the queen of hearts to hold the first trick. East cannot rise with the king because that sets up a finesse position against the jack. After winning the heart continuation, declarer enters dummy with a trump and leads a club, inserting the jack when East follows low. West wins and returns, say, a club. Declarer takes the ace, crosses to the table with a trump and ruffs a heart. Another trump is the entry to lead the ten of hearts and, when East shows out, declarer discards a diamond. West wins, but must either give declarer a ruff-and-sluff by leading a club, or else play a diamond into declarer's A Q. Either way, the second diamond loser vanishes.

Mavericks upset Spurs; Celtics beat Kings 98-97

SAN ANTONIO (R) — Jim Jackson scored 37 points, including a go-ahead 3-point play with 16.8 seconds left, as the Dallas Mavericks snapped a six-game road losing streak with a 108-103 win over the San Antonio Spurs on Sunday.

Jackson drew San Antonio star centre David Robinson into fouling him as he hit a jumper to snap a 103-103 tie. Jackson then made the free throw.

"I felt that I had a smaller guy on me (Doc Rivers). I just wanted to get the shot up," Jackson said. "I saw David come at me and I was able to get the foul."

"He's really the man. That last 3-point play was half determination and half skill," Dallas coach Dick Motta said of Jackson. "He beat his man and then shot it right in David's face and then made his free throw."

"I got caught in an awkward situation," said Robinson. "He jumped into me and got the foul and that was good for him."

Popeye Jones added 16 points for Dallas (16-17), which improved to 2-0 against San Antonio (20-12) this season after dropping the previous 16 meetings. The Mavericks played without Roy Tarpley due to tendinitis in his left knee.

Robinson, whose breakaway dunk with 34.6 seconds remaining capped an 11-2 run that tied the game at 103-103, had a season-high 43 points and 17 rebounds to pace San Antonio.

Vinny Del Negro added 20 points for the Spurs, who had their seven-game home winning streak snapped and lost for the just the third time in their last 16 games.

San Antonio had a chance to tie the game, but Sean Elliott missed a 3-pointer with 7.7 seconds to play. Jamal Mashburn grabbed the rebound and was fouled. He sank both free throws, handing the Spurs their first home loss since December 8.

In Boston, Dee Brown hit a driving layup as time expired to lift the Celtics to a wild 98-97 victory over the Sacramento Kings.

Sacramento, which rallied from a 17-point second-quarter deficit, blew a 97-90 lead with 1:31 remaining. The Kings held a 97-94 advantage when Spud Webb fouled David Wesley attempting a game-tying 3-pointer with nine seconds left.

Given three free throws, Wesley made the first two and missed the third. But the rebound went out of bounds off Webb, giving Boston a final chance. Brown then drove the lane and banked in the winning basket, sending Sacramento to its 16th straight loss at Boston.

Orlando Magic #54 forward Horace Grant pulls in a rebound against Minnesota Timberwolves' centre Stacey King #21 (AFP photo)

"I just tried to do what I could," Brown said of the winning basket. "But I made a point this time of not passing it after what happened against Utah."

Brown turned the ball over attempting to pass in the closing seconds of Boston's 95-93 loss to Utah Friday night.

"This doesn't make up for Friday, but we found a way to win it at the end," said Celtics coach Chris Ford. "A couple of great plays by David (Wesley) and also Dee Brown. It was great to see Dee Brown get the basket by going to the basket. That was an absolutely great play."

Dominique Wilkins scored 22 points to lead the Celtics, who won for the third time in four games. Dino Radja added 18, while Eric Montross chipped in with 14 points and 13 rebounds. Boston had a season-high 14 blocks, including a career-high six by Radja.

Sacramento, which hasn't won at Boston since 1978, was led by rookie Brian Grant's 25 points and 12 rebounds. Mitch Richmond contributed 24 points, Webb scored 18 and Olden Polynice had 12 points and 12 rebounds.

In Seattle, Gary Payton scored 29 points and had nine assists and Shawn Kemp added 24 points to lead the Supersonics to a 131-124 victory over the Portland Trail Blazers.

The win was the sixth in a row and 12th in 14 games for the Supersonics. Seattle has won six consecutive games against the Trail Blazers. The loss snapped Portland's four-game winning streak.

Rod Strickland scored a career-high 32 points for the Trail Blazers. Clifford Robinson and Clyde Drexler added 30 apiece.

Detlef Schrempf, who finished with 21 points for Seattle, needed two points to reach the 10,000-point milestone and achieved the plateau when he converted a free throw in the second quarter.

Villagers pray to save championships

MONACHIL, Spain (R) — Villagers in Spain's Sierra Nevada will pray for snow Tuesday to save the Alpine skiing world championships due to start there in a fortnight's time. "We will walk from Monachil to a site a little way outside the town ... there we will pray for water for our people and snow for our mountains," Jose Sevilla, mayor of the mountain resort of Monachil, told Reuters. "The snows and the championships are very important for the village. The shopkeepers and restaurant owners here are depending on them," he said. Sevilla said parish priest Jose Vega would head the procession with an effigy of Monachil's patron saint, Saint Anthony.

Spanish First Division results

Celta	0	Real Betis	2
Barcelona	3	Logrones	0
Real Valladolid	1	Albacete	1
Real Oviedo	1	Athletic Bilbao	1
Real Sociedad	2	Sporting Gijon	2
Valencia	0	Espanol	0
Atletico Madrid	1	Compostela	1
Deportivo Coruna	0	Real Madrid	0

Moroccan First Division results

Mohammedia	2	Meknes	0
Auxiliary Forces	0	Rabat	0
Marrakesh	0	Raja Casablanca	1
Tangier	0	Credit Agricole	2
Kenitra	1	Olympic Casablanca	1
Wydad Casablanca	0	Al-Jadida	0
Royal Army	2	Settat	0
Fez	0	Oujda	2

Belgian football results

Lierse	0	Lommel	0
KV Mechelen	1	Charleroi	3
FC Bruges	3	RWD Molenbeek	1
Beveren	4	La Gent	0
Anderlecht	1	Cercle Bruges	1
St. Truiden	1	RFC Liege	0
Antwerp	0	Standard Liege	1
Seraing	2	Ostende	2
Aalst	0	Ekeren	3

Tunisian First Division results

Esperance St.	1	ES Zarzis	0
Club Africain	1	CS Hamam Lif	1
Stade Tunisien	3	CA Bizertin	0
Es Sahel	3	AS Marsa	0
Sfax RS	1	O Beja	0
Oc Kerkenah	1	JS Kairouan	0

Cyprus First Division results

Omonia	1	Apoel	1
Paralimni	0	Anorthosis	1
AEK	1	Apollon	0
AEL	0	Salamnia	2
Aris	1	Olympiakos	2
Aradippou	3	Ethnikos	0

هكذا من الأصل

Ramtha advance to Jordan Cup final

AMMAN (J.T.) — Al Ramtha Monday advanced to the final of the Jordan Cup after overcoming Al Arabi 2-1 in their second-leg semifinal. Their first round encounter had ended 1-0 for Al Ramtha.

Al Ramtha will now play titleholders Al Faisali in the final. Al Faisali had eliminated Al Hussein after a penalty shootout as both their semifinal ties ended in scoreless of draws.

Al Faisali will be seeking a record eighth Jordan Cup while Al Ramtha will be aiming to clinch their third.

SPORTS IN BRIEF

Issel quits as NBA coach

DENVER (AFP) — Denver Nuggets coach Dan Issel quit Sunday, saying his job guiding the National Basketball Association (NBA) club was "making me something I don't want to be." Issel said he will remain here with the team in some capacity, but vowed never to coach again. "I never coached before and I certainly won't coach again," Issel said. "I tried to make the right decision for my family and for the organisation." Issel was in his third season as coach of the Nuggets. His record in that span was 96-102, but the club had improved from 38-46 to 42-40 last season, including a first-round playoff upset of league regular-season kingpin Seattle. The Nuggets, among the league's youngest clubs, were 18-16 so far this season after beating reigning NBA champion Houston 118-104 Saturday.

Strachan quits Premier League

LONDON (R) — Leeds and Scotland midfielder Gordon Strachan decided on Monday to quit playing English Premier League soccer. Strachan, 37, who has been plagued by a back injury for some time, will concentrate on coaching at Leeds and plans to make the occasional reserve team appearance. Strachan, who has won footballer of the year awards in both Scotland and England, played for Dundee United and Aberdeen before joining Manchester United in 1984. His transfer to Leeds in 1989 sparked a new spell of success for the club and he was a key member of the team who won the league championship in 1991-92. Strachan recently dropped out of the Scottish international scene after a run of injuries and found it increasingly difficult to hold a Leeds' first team place.

Sex scandal hits Malaysian athletics

KUALA LUMPUR (AFP) — Malaysia, grappling with a major soccer bribery scandal, is now to revamp its national athletics body following allegations of sexual harrassment of female athletes, it was reported here Monday. The whole Malaysian Amateur Athletics Union (MAAU) will be reviewed following the recommendations of the report on sexual harrassment of women athletics, Youth and Sports Minister Ghani Othman said. The ministry set up a special committee after 21-year old Rabia Abdul Salam, one of Malaysia's most promising athletes, killed herself by swallowing sports linament laced with salicyclid acid last February. An inquest last week, which returned a suicide verdict, was told that the unmarried Rabia was pregnant. Police later charged Ramanathan Chelliah, a 52-year old national athletics coach, for taking sexual advantage of two female athletes.

Mader upsets the stars

KITZBUHEL, Austria (AFP) — Gunther Mader of Austria upset the stars — and Luc Alphand's hat-trick bid — as he won the World Cup super-G slalom Monday. Pre-race favourites Alphand and Patrick Ortlieb both lagged far behind as Mader won in 1min 21.52sec, edging it from improving Italian Peter Runggaldier by three hundredths of a second. The win took Mader to second in the overall World Cup standings behind Italian Alberto Tomba. Another Austrian, Armin Assinger, won his second podium of the last three days by coming in third with a deficit of 18 hundredths of a second behind the winner. The focus before the race was firmly on Luc Alphand, who made history here on Saturday by winning two downhills on the same day, and Austrian Ortlieb, the winner of the first super-G of the season at Tignes in December.

Hughes out for a month

LONDON (AFP) — Manchester United striker Mark Hughes will miss a month after injuring his knee against Newcastle. But that news delighted the player and his club, who had feared the Welsh international had damaged knee ligaments and could face a major stint on the sidelines. Hughes was injured in a collision with Newcastle goalkeeper Pavel Srnicek immediately after scoring United's goal in the 1-1 draw. He required 15 stitches in a gash but doctors confirmed there was no ligament trouble. United boss Alex Ferguson said: "Compared to the fears we had of his damage from the first examination, this is great news. "His knee is in plaster, and he will come back in an ambulance on Tuesday. He'll be out for a month, but that is not as bad as we feared. The injury is not as serious as it could have been."

S.F. 49ers end Cowboys' reign; Chargers reach first Super Bowl

SAN FRANCISCO (Agencies) — Forget about "Threepeats." There will be no third straight American Football Championship by the Dallas Cowboys.

Instead, San Francisco quarterback Steve Young will try to escape the final shadow of former 49er legend Joe Montana by leading his team to the Super Bowl crown.

The 49ers eliminated Dallas 38-28 in Sunday's National Football League (NFL) semi-finals Sunday, setting up the January 29 championship game against San Diego, which ousted Pittsburgh 17-13 in the other playoff game.

Young threw for two touchdowns and ran for another, while a defence rebuilt after two straight NFL semi-final losses to the Cowboys forced five turnovers and shut down Dallas in the cruical final minutes.

"It's a great feeling," Young said. "It's something you just can't believe. I can't describe a feeling like this."

The all-California Super Bowl matchup in Miami will be a rematch of a regular-season game won by the 49ers 38-15. San Francisco are 4-0 in Super Bowl trips, but this will be their first without Montana to guide them.

"It's the greatest coaching moment of my life," 49ers' mentor George Seifert said.

San Franciscans shook off days of severe flooding in Northern California to celebrate in the streets after their 49ers beat the two-time defending champion Dallas Cowboys.

This game, played in front of a record 69,125 Candlestick Park crowd, was hyped all week as the "real" Super Bowl, and a chance for San Francisco to avenge losses to the Cowboys in NFC title tilts the previous two years.

After the Niners' victory, big crowds collected in the streets, cheering and chanting. Traffic was snarled all over town as drivers drove through honking horns and waving 49er flags.

Seifert said the fans' spirit reminded him of the wild and crazy days when San Francisco's Haight-Ashbury neighbourhood was the world capital of free-spirited hippiedom.

The 49ers capitalised on three Dallas turnovers to take a 21-0 lead in the first 7:27 of the game and kept command the rest of the way.

Steve Young connected with Jerry Rice on a 29-yard touchdown pass eight seconds before the half-time to give San Francisco a 31-14 lead at the break.

"That really was the big play of the game," Young said. "That one just before half-time put them away. But give them credit. They fought the whole way. It was a death-blows kind of a game."

The Cowboys recovered Adam Walker's fumble on the second-half kickoff and pulled within 31-21 on Emmitt Smith's 1-yard touchdown run. But Young boosted the 49er margin on a three-yard touchdown run 8:21 into the third quarter.

Dallas moved within 10 points again on Michael Irvin's 10-yard touchdown pass from Troy Aikman with 8:29 remaining, but the 49ers sacked Aikman four times on the final two Dallas drives to seal the Cowboys' fate.

Eric Davis returned an intercepted Aikman pass 44 yards for a touchdown to give the 49ers a lead only 62 seconds into the game.

Davis then forced a fumble by Irvin to set up a 29-yard touchdown pass from Young to Ricky Watters. The Cowboys fumbled away the subsequent kickoff to set up William Floyd's 1-yard touchdown run for the 49ers.

"I knew I had to make some big plays," Davis said. "I was able to get some things done early and that inspired the rest of the team to make some big plays."

Dallas owner Jerry Jones refused to second-guess his decision to fire Jimmy Johnson, who coached the Cowboys to two NFL titles, and replace him with Barry Switzer this year.

"I made the decision. I stick with it," Jones said. "One thing you can't beat in this game are turnovers."

Deion Sanders, the flamboyant 49er defender who kept receiver Alvin Harper in check, turned down richer offers to play here, but found his first Super Bowl visit worth it.

"Let people all over the world know that all my dreams came true here," Sanders said. "Money, fame, nothing made a difference. Good things come to those who wait."

At Pittsburgh, Stan Humphries threw 43-yard touchdown passes to Alfred Pupunu and Tony Martin, rallying the Chargers from a 13-3 deficit into San Diego's first Super Bowl in the club's 34-year history.

"We have been underdogs all the way through this season," said San Diego linebacker Junior Seau, who made 12 tackles. "We had to do something rare to get the respect we deserve. Hopefully that will happen again in two weeks."

"We did an outstanding job defensively," San Diego coach Bobby Ross said. "They kept us in the game in the first half when we were having trouble offensively."

San Diego's Stan Humphries completed 11 of 22 passes for 165 yards while Natrone Means rushed 20 times for 69 yards.

"We got disrespected all week," Means said. "They had Super Bowl parties. We've been getting disrespected all year long. We knew we had to come out and fight."

The Chargers,. expected to finish in the basement when the season began, started 6-0 but struggled late in the season and were underdogs to Pittsburgh.

"I hope people give us some credit, but I doubt it will happen," Humphries said. "It's nothing new. No one has given us any respect all year."

Pittsburgh players respect San Diego now.

"This is worse than losing in the playoffs the last two years. I can't even describe it," Steelers' defender Rod Woodson said.

"We let the whole season slip away," teammate Darren Perry added.

'Chargers longest of NFL long shots'

In Las Vegas, Nevada, oddsmakers here in the U.S. betting capitol made San Francisco a 17½ point favourite over San Diego in the January 29 Super Bowl game, the widest opening margin in American football finals history.

Bettors favouring the 49ers pushed the line to 18 and 19 points at many bookmakers here within minutes of the second semi-final.

The last time one team was such as underdog was 26 years ago, when Baltimore opened as a 17-point favourite over the New York Jets, who stunned the sport by taking the game 16-7.

"It's not that the Chargers are the weakest team that has ever been in the Super Bowl," said Michael Roxborough, who sets odds for 75 per cent of the betting parlors here. "It's that the performance by the 49ers was totally devastating."

Nevada bettors wagered $54.5 million on last year's Super Bowl, with bookmakers keeping $7.5 million in profits. Gambling on this year's game got off to a fast start.

"The first bet we took was more than $10,000 on the 49ers," said casino manager Lenny Del Genio.

Rams will move to St. Louis

Georgia Frontiere, owner of the National Football League's Los Angeles Rams, has said she will sign officials papers Tuesday to move the Rams to St. Louis, according to the Los Angeles Times.

Rough seas cannot stop New Zealanders

SAN DIEGO (AFP) — New Zealand boats weathered tough challenges and rough seas with unusually strong winds to win two America's Cup races Sunday.

Winds of 11 to 18 knots pushed Russell Coutts' Team New Zealand past France 2 by two minutes and 40 seconds in the Louis Vuitton challenger trials, while Chris Dickson's TAG Heuer Challenge came from behind to defeat Nippon by 57 seconds.

Sydney 95 had no trouble with Spain, winning by 3:43, while OneAustralia had a bye.

On the defenders' course, PACT 95 sailed its first race and overcame a rash of continuing difficulties with its battered boat Young America to defeat the America3 women by 37 seconds.

"It seemed more like sailing 12 metres off Fremantle than America's Cup Class boats off San Diego," Dickson said. "All our guys felt like they'd been in the washing machine for a few hours."

Nippon skipper Makoto Namba joked to Dickson, "You were my skipper (in 1992) and you were very good. I was very happy just to cross the finish line with the mast still up."

PACT 95, the team from Maine, had spent eight days repairing its boat after it was damaged in a freak "mini-tornado" while ashore on January 4.

Young America blew out its colourful, 30,000 custom-painted spinnaker and lost its electronic wind and navigation sensors off the mast, among other problems, but overtook America3 on the last windward leg when the women had to do a penalty turn for tacking too close.

"The judges made a nice call. We definitely fouled PACT," America3 navigator Courtenay Becker-Dey said.

Dennis Conner, who split the first two races against America3, had a bye.

Pajot had France 2 trailing New Zealand by only a half-minute on the first of three windward-leeward laps when the topping lift on the spinnaker pole gave way. The pole fell into the water and dragged alongside for more than a minute, allowing Coutts to stretch his lead to a commanding 1:12 at the first leeward mark. The French were never in contention after that.

A day earlier, the French lost their lead and the race to Sydney 95 after their spinnaker tore in two 200 metres from the finish line. Last Dec. 6 their boat was seriously damaged when it fell 10 feet to the ground while being hoisted at the compound.

After that incident, the French rescheduled their formal christening to avoid Friday the 13th, but apparently it didn't help.

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Jim Carrey in **THE MASK** Shows: 12:30, 3:30, 6:15, 8:30, 10:30		**Fifi Abdo, Mamduh Abdul Alim & Adel Adham in: The Banner Is Red** Arabic Shows: 12:30, 3:30, 6:30, 8:30, 10:30 **The movie: The Lion King will be shown at 5 p.m. every evening as well as extra shows on Fridays and Thursdays at 10:30**		**CONCORD "1"** Sylvester Stallone - Sharon Stone in **THE SPECIALIST** Shows: 12:30, 3:30, 6, 8:15, 10:30 **CONCORD "2"** Harrison Ford - Whitney Houston — **THE BODYGUARD** Shows: 3, 5.		**SUM'A** In the satirical play **HI CITIZEN** Composed and directed by Mohammad Al Shawaqfeh **Daily from 8.30 p.m.** Children's Play **The Ninja Turtles Show** Directed by Akram Abul Ragheb Daily at 3.30 p.m.	Presents **Abu Awwad** in the social comedy **Punctured Bag** **The theatre is closed on Mondays Tickets are available all day**	Presents: The political satire: **AL SALAM YA SALAM** at 8:30 p.m. For reservation, please call 625155 In English Sunday January 15, 1995

Iraq defiant, Saddam solid on Gulf war anniversary

BAGHDAD (R) — Iraq marked the fourth anniversary of the start of the Gulf war on Monday with defiance and vows of "no retreat," no concessions" to the United States and its allies.

On this day in 1991, a formidable U.S.-led multinational force mounted one of the most ferocious air and missile assaults in recent history to force Iraqi troops out of Kuwait.

Although the 42-day campaign pushed Iraq out of Kuwait and forced Baghdad to accept ceasefire terms set by the U.S. and its allies, Iraq is not taking a defeatist view.

The government is staging wide-ranging celebrations to mark the "mother of battles," Iraq's term for the war. In Baghdad, the streets are festooned with ribbons and portraits of President Saddam Hussein.

"Saddam is there at the helm of power and now there is more hope in the horizon for him to survive the sanctions than any time in the past four years," a western diplomat said.

That holds despite Western pressures on Iraq in the form of Gulf war ceasefire terms requiring the dismantling of weapons of mass destruction and monitoring of Iraq's arms industry, as well as sanctions barring sales of oil, Iraq's economic lifeblood.

U.N. arms inspectors have rid Iraq of its lethal weapons and potential to produce them, but a U.N. Special Commission has complained that Baghdad has not provided full information about some past programmes.

The trade sanctions have devastated Iraq's economy, leading to hyper-inflation and untold misery and hardships for the population. The U.N. Security Council decided last week to make no changes in the sanctions for the being. time

Impoverished Iraqis, once used to a relatively affluent way of life, scramble for a living. The crippling sanctions have reduced the majority to subsistence on meagre government rations which provide less than half of a person's monthly needs for sugar, rice, bread and cooking oil.

Despite sanctions-related suffering, Baghdad is still striking a defiant chord, saying the U.S. and allies failed to weaken President Saddam's government or force it to submit unconditionally to Washington's terms.

"We are determined not to retreat or give concessions. We shall remain loyal to our leader and his path," said the ruling Baath Party newspaper in a front-page editorial.

It said the U.S. drafted the Gulf war resolutions to get rid of the Iraqi government but had failed.

"The Americans are frustrated ... and the world laughs at them. They thought within days they will install a frail alternative," Al Thawra said.

Divisions in the Arab and Western alliance on how to deal with Baghdad have come into the open. But though differing on how to approach the sanctions, the allies who fought Iraq in 1991 are now almost unanimous there is no viable alternative to the government in Baghdad.

"If anything he (Saddam) is holding a racially and religiously heterogeneous country together. It seems West's attempts to divide Iraq on such grounds are bound to failure," said another diplomat.

The U.S., France and Britain police "no-fly" zones in Iraq, ostensibly to protect rebel Kurds and dissident Shiites from attacks by Iraqi armed forces.

Opposition to the government in Baghdad is crumbling. Rebel Kurds are locked in factional fighting and a senior U.N. envoy in Iraq said law and order were diminishing in northern Iraq.

The Iran-backed Shiite opposition is viewed here as a Tehran stooge and seems to be devoid of a popular base in the mainly Shiite south.

In addition, the government in Baghdad is no longer the international pariah Washington wanted it to be.

France officially received Deputy Prime Minister Tareq Aziz this month and Baghdad has three permanent members of the U.N. Security Council — France, Russia, and China — on its side in advocating an early lifting of the ban on Iraq oil exports, the country's economic lifeblood.

"We have the right to be proud and declare that it is Iraq which emerged victorious and foiled enemy schemes," Al Thawra said.

Prime Minister Sharif Zeid Ben Shaker and Minister of Industry and Trade Ali Abul Ragheb on Monday meet with a delegation from the Nablus Chamber of Commerce (Petra photo)

Sharif Zeid assures professional associations over public freedoms

AMMAN (Petra) — Prime Minister Sharif Zeid Ben Shaker said Monday that the government would ensure public freedoms within the rule of the law, encourage constructive dialogue and seek to enhance national unity.

Speaking at a meeting in his office with the presidents of Jordanian professional associations, Sharif Zeid said the government was keen on developing professional and trade union activities as it appreciates the major role played by these organisations in all fields.

Laith Shbeilat, chairman of the Union of Professional Associations, congratulated Sharif Zeid on forming his government and stressed that the association was keen on full cooperation with the government in all issues that serve national goals.

Sharif Zeid said the government would speed up the enactment of legislation concerning the activities of professional associations. He also promised that the government would examine issues related to civil servants who are members of professional associations.

Also on Monday Sharif Zeid received in his office the president and members of the Nablus Chamber of Commerce in the presence of Minister of Industry and Trade Ali Abul Ragheb.

The chamber's president, Muath Nabulsi, congratulated the prime minister on forming the new government and discussed with him scopes of Jordanian-Palestinian cooperation in trade and economic sectors.

Haidar Murad, chairman of the Amman Chamber of Commerce, was present at the meeting.

Oslo-Tehran dispute worsens

OSLO (R) — Norway recalled its ambassador in Iran on Monday in a diplomatic row centring on the death edict imposed by Tehran's late revolutionary leader on author Salman Rushdie.

Iran has already recalled its ambassador to Norway, where Mr. Rushdie's publisher was seriously wounded in a 1993 shooting. Tehran has made clear the recall was because the envoy had been too conciliatory about the death edict in a letter to the Norwegian government.

An Oslo foreign ministry statement said Norway's ambassador to Tehran, Birger Bye, was recalled for consultations after Tehran withdrew this letter.

"This is a pretty strong diplomatic reaction," foreign ministry spokesman Ingvard Havnen said.

Asked whether Norway's ambassador to Tehran could be recalled for good, Mr. Havnen said: "We cannot rule out anything."

The Iranian envoy's letter had been sent in June to Norway's foreign ministry. The letter was taken to mean Iran would not pursue Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini's "fatwa," or death edict, against the British author and others linked to his novel "the Satanic Verses" in Norway.

Ayatollah Khomeini issued the edict in 1989 on Mr. Rushdie, saying his novel was blasphemous and insulted Islam. It extends to all connected with the book, such as publishers and translators.

William Nygaard, head of the Oslo publisher that issued "the Satanic Verses" in Norwegian, was shot three times from behind and wounded outside his Oslo home in October 1993.

Police have made no arrests and Iran has denied any involvement in the Nygaard shooting.

"Norway regrets that Iran now wishes to withdraw the letter which the Iranian embassy ... sent to the foreign ministry saying that the fatwa linked to Salman Rushdie's book 'the Satanic Verses' will not be acted on by Iranian authorities in Norway," Foreign Minister Bjoern Tore Godal said in a statement.

The foreign ministry said it had been informed by Iran that Tehran had recalled its ambassador, Abdolrahim Gavahi, because his letter had not been approved by Iranian authorities. Mr. Gavahi left Oslo in October and has not been replaced.

"Iranian authorities have made it clear that they will not send any new ambassador to Oslo for the time being," Mr. Havnen said.

Foreign Minister Godal said Norway would continue its efforts to cancel the "totally unacceptable" fatwa and urged Iran to drop the death edict. "Norway will continue working against the fatwa," Mr. Havnen said.

The Japanese translator of "the Satanic Verses," Hitoshi Igarashi, was stabbed to death in 1991. Ettore Capriolo, who translated the novel into Italian, was injured in a knife attack at his flat the same year. Neither case has been solved.

Norwegian publisher Nygaard, who has recovered from his wounds and is living in hiding, has said he is convinced the attack was related to the death edict.

Nayef Hawatmeh demands right for all DFLP leaders to move to Gaza

DAMASCUS (Agencies) — The Democratic Front for the Liberation of Palestine (DFLP), a Palestinian group based in Syria, urged the international community on Monday to press Israel to allow opponents of the peace deal with the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) to return to their homeland.

"The DFLP called upon Russia, the U.S. and the European Union in an official and public memorandum to interfere officially with Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin's government to break a decision banning the return of the leaderships, cadres and strugglers of the PLO ... who oppose the Oslo deal," the DFLP said.

The statement followed reports from Israel that DFLP leader Nayef Hawatmeh had asked permission to move to the self-ruled Gaza Strip despite his opposition to the peace deal with Israel.

Israel Radio reported on Monday that Mr. Hawatmeh's request was transmitted in Moscow during the last week to Israeli Ambasador Aliza Shenhar by the head of the Middle East department in the Russian Foreign Ministry.

In comments to the AFP, Mr. Hawatmeh confirmed that he was seeking the right of all DFLP leaders to live in Gaza.

An official Israeli source said the request was passed on to the Israeli defence establishment. Israeli army radio said security sources, citing a history of anti-Israeli guerrilla attacks, believed Mr. Hawatmeh would be denied permission.

A similar request by Mr. Hawatmeh would have to be made of PLO Chairman Yasser Arafat, who took over Gaza from Israel last year.

But there was no immediate comment from the PLO chief, who was in Morocco on Monday, or from the Palestinian Authority in Gaza.

Israel Radio said it had obtained part of the DFLP leader's message in which he underlined his "opposition to the peace process," but added that he would "not work against peace if authorized to settle with his family in Gaza."

According to Mr. Hawatmeh, his move would "contribute to strengthening opponents of the rise of Hamas and Islamic Jihad."

The Islamic Resistance Movement Hamas and the Jihad spearhead military resistance to the Israeli occupation.

In Gaza City, DFLP central committee member Nihad Abu Gosh, said: "This is not true.

"If Hawatmeh comes here it will only be when the time is right and it will be without paying any political price," he told AFP.

The DFLP is one of 10 Palestinian factions in the "rejectionist front" headquartered in Damascus which have vowed to fight the declaration of principles for autonomy which Mr. Arafat signed with Israel in September 1993.

Mr. Hawatmeh, a Jordanian Christian, founded the DFLP in February 22, 1969, in a split from the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine led by George Habash.

The DFLP supported the 1988 decision by the Palestinian parliament-in-exile to accept the 1947 U.N. partition of Palestine and U.N. resolutions 242 and 338 which recognise the right of all peoples in the region to live within secure borders.

NEWS IN BRIEF

PLO gets $6.2m from Saudi committee

RIYADH (AFP) — A Saudi committee said Monday it had given 23 million riyals ($6.2 million) to the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) raised from a levy on the wages of Palestinians working in the kingdom and voluntary contributions. Since July 1992 the committee has donated $27.5 million to the PLO, the last payment of $1.5 million being made in November. The money is raised from a five per cent levy on the salaries of the 200,000 Palestinians who live in the kingdom, as well as contributions from Saudis and foreign nationals. Several Gulf Arab states have resumed donations to the PLO frozen after Iraq invaded Kuwait in August 1990 when the Palestinians were seen as backing Baghdad.

3,000 held under Egyptian emergency law

CAIRO (AFP) — Around 3,000 people are being held in Egyptian prisons without trial under the country's emergency law, Interior Minister Hassan Al Alfi said Sunday. "These prisoners who represent a threat to state security are either (Islamic) terrorist elements or drug traffickers. They number no more than three thousand," Mr. Alfi told a conference on the sidelines of the Cairo international book fair. Emergency laws have been in force in Egypt since the 1981 assassination of President Anwar Al Sadat. General Alfi said "it turns out that terrorist elements, once freed, commit further attacks." The figures he gave do not include hundreds of Islamic fundamentalists held in prison after being tried and sentenced.

Beilin to visit Cairo to cool war of words

TEL AVIV (AFP) — Yossi Beilin, Israel's deputy foreign minister, goes to Egypt on Sunday in a bid to defuse a growing dispute over Israel's refusal to sign the nuclear non-proliferation treaty. Mr. Beilin said he would be seeking "proper clarification" during a one or two-day stay. But he sought to play down differences with Egypt over the campaign saying a "small and artificial new situation" had been "blown out of proportion." Talk of a war was "very far from any reality," Mr. Beilin added. "Relations between Israel and Egypt are the cornerstone of the whole structure of peace in the Middle East," Mr. Beilin said, paying tribute to Cairo's pivotal role in the peace process. Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak last Wednesday criticised Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin's call for Israel to prepare for war in the long term (see page 2).

Guerrillas attack Israeli forces

MARJAYOUN (AFP) — Guerrillas launched a series of attacks on Israeli forces and their militia allies in southern Lebanon on Monday, a day after deadly Israeli air raids near Beirut, security officials said.

Police said a 45-year-old woman was seriously wounded and several homes damaged in retaliatory Israeli and militia fire as 100 tank and artillery shells rained on villages facing Israel's "security zone."

Lebanese army gunners, deployed north of the buffer zone in South Lebanon, fired back with artillery, they said.

The Amal group claimed responsibility for an anti-tank rocket attack on a position of the Israeli-backed South Lebanon Army (SLA) militia in the central sector of the zone. It also fired mortars at another outpost.

An armoured vehicle and a tank were destroyed in the attacks, according to Amal, which is led by Parliamentary Speaker Nabih Berri. The SLA confirmed the attacks but said there were no casualties.

The Hizbollah group said it shelled two SLA positions in the "security zone" and detonated a road-side bomb as an Israeli intelligence vehicle drove by in the northern sector of the zone.

Bahrain opposition denounces expulsions

NICOSIA (Agencies) — Bahrain's opposition-in-exile on Monday denounced the expulsion of people linked to unrest in the emirate and called on the government to open a dialogue.

"The deportation measures which the authorities have resorted to will not resolve the crisis which can only be done through dialogue," the Islamic Front for the Liberation of Bahrain (IFLB) said in a statement to news agencies.

Dialogue was needed "to meet the social and economic demands which are the cause of popular discontent."

Bahrain on Sunday confirmed it had expelled "a group of individuals who had infiltrated from abroad and whose responsibility for the troubles in Bahrain has been proved," the Gulf News Agency (GNA) said.

Opposition groups said leading Shiite cleric Sheikh Ali Salman whose arrest on Dec. 5 sparked clashes was deported to Dubai in the United Arab Emirates (UAE), along with two other clerics, Sheikh Hamza Diri and Haidar Sitri.

A statement sent to Nicosia by the London-based Islamic Movement Al Ahrar said the decision "to deport Sheikh Salman shows the failure of the government's policies and cannot stop the Bahrainis' uprising."

The government, which did not say how many people had been expelled, also said it had freed 200 people arrested during the unrest. There was no independent confirmation.

"We call on Arab governments to put pressure on the Bahraini leaders to authorise the return of the deporters and free all the political detainees," the Beirut-based IFLB said.

The official Gulf News Agency also said that a number of foreigners were deported "after it had been confirmed that they planned and instigated these sabotage acts."

Sheikh Salman was accused of inciting youths to disrupt a charity run through Shi'ite villages in which both men and women participated. His arrest and those of some of his followers triggered the unrest that was renewed over the past week.

Without giving any figures, sources quoted by the GNA added that a number of detainees were now being questioned and would stand trial "for commiting acts of violence, unrest and sabotage and harming the loving, family atmosphere (of Bahrain)."

The opposition has said a total of 16 people died in the clashes between hundreds of Shiites and the security forces, but the Sunni-led Bahraini authorities have only acknowledged the death of one policeman.

According to the Committee for the Defence of Political Prisoners in Bahrain based in London, 2,186 people have been arrested since the start of the violence.

Violence rocks Algeria despite peace proposal

ALGIERS (AFP) — Islamic militants in Algeria have escalated a campaign of assassinations even as religious and secular opposition movements make peace proposals to the military-backed government.

On Sunday, a member of the legislative transitional national council was murdered in an Algiers suburb in an attack blamed by security forces on extremist gunmen.

Falah Nour, 65, was shot as the most radical of the fundamentalist movements, the Armed Islamic Group (GIA), announced that it was ready to "stop the war" on certain terms, in an unauthenticated statement.

In Rome on Friday, the outlawed Islamic Salvation Front (FIS) and a large part of the secular opposition ended five days of talks with an offer to negotiate with the government to end the conflict.

A day earlier, six activists of the former sole, ruling National Liberation Front (FLN) were murdered near Relizane in the west of Algeria in an attack the security forces also blamed on fundamentalists.

The FLN was a party to the agreement signed in Rome with the FIS and another opposition movement, the Socialist Forces Front (FFS).

These parties won parliamentary seats in free elections in December 1991, before the military stepped in to cancel the second round of the poll in January 1992 once it was clear the FIS was poised for an overwhelming victory.

The head of the FIS executive in exile, Rabah Kebir, warned that Algeria will "plunge into total chaos and open civil war" if the government does not agree to the peace offer, in an interview published Monday by the Spanish daily El Pais.

France meanwhile welcomed the Rome accord Monday, urging that it pave the way for dialogue.

"France has always called for dialogue between those who use and those who renounce violence," said foreign ministry spokesman Richard Duque, describing the contract as an "offer of peace."

"Now it is up to all political groups in Algeria, and to them alone, to agree on the means and ways of developing the spirit of dialogue which will allow Algeria to get out of the current crisis," he said.

The parties to the Rome talks, held under the aegis of a Roman Catholic community and dismissed by the Algiers government as meddling in its internal affairs, agreed on the priority objective of stopping the "bloodbath."

But clashes and killings have been on the increase in recent weeks, according to a partial toll established here.

On Jan. 10, eleven people were killed when their coach was raked with automatic weapons fire.

COLUMN

Charles shattered over valet's betrayal

LONDON (R) — Britain's Prince Charles was shattered after his trusted valet betrayed him by revealing alleged intimate secrets of his affair with his mistress Camilla Parker Bowles, British newspapers said Monday. Ken Stronach was suspended on full pay Sunday after he told a British newspaper that he had to wash the mud from Prince Charles' pyjamas after he sneaked out of his country home to make love to his married mistress while his wife Princess Diana slept inside the house. "He is clearly hurt. He never believed that Ken, of all people, would do this," the tabloid Daily Mirror quoted a palace insider as saying. Buckingham Palace Prince Charles' Press Secretary Richard Aylard would investigate the story which appeared in the News Of The World newspaper. Police were also looking into a possible security breach. "As Charles banished him from Balmoral (Castle), he was believed to be shattered to learn his most senior personal servant had turned traitor," the Daily Express said. The News Of The World said stronach told them that when Princess Diana was away from the country home the prince would sneak Camilla into his bedroom. "We were told to treat her as if she was the mistress of the house. It was as if the princess had never existed," Mr. Stronach was quoted as saying.

Blackmailer Uncle Scrooge to face the music

BERLIN (AFP) — German blackmailer extraordinaire Arno Funke, alias Uncle Scrooge, led German police on a merry dance for two years before his arrest last year, becoming a media hero in the process, but he will have to face the music Tuesday when his trial opens in Berlin. Funke, 44, is charged with blackmail and placing explosives in several Karstadt department stores and the huge Kaufhaus des Westens (KaDeWe) store in Berlin and demanding millions of marks from them for not setting them off. On several occasions, he did set off the charges, injuring two people and causing damage worth 6.8 million marks ($4.5 million). One one occasion, his threats netted him 500,000 marks from KaDeWe. But after several narrow evading a police dragnet, his luck ran out in April last year, when police pounced to nab him as he placed a phone call trying to organise a new ransom. Several times, Mr. Funke, for no apparent reason nicknamed Dagobert, the German version of Uncle Scrooge, picked up hauls of worthless paper laid to trap him by German authorities. In April 1993, he ordered investigators to leave a stash of baknotes in a suitcase on a parking lot. When police moved in on the case, they found Dagobert had escaped into thin air. In fact, he had placed the case on a manhole cover, before returning via the sewers to find it crammed with false banknotes. He then made his getaway the way he had come — via the sewers. For the police, the whole affair became a nightmare, as Dagobert evaded them at every turn. Once, a policeman slipped on dog excrement just as he was about to grab the blackmailer. Mr. Funke admitted the crimes on his arrest, and his trial hearing, set to last 21 days, will therefore focus on his personality and motives for a crime which has already been the subject of two films. His lawyer said Mr. Funke, a former painter, resorted to blackmail after ill-health forced him to stop working.

Italy, Britain top survey in home burglaries

LONDON (R) — Britain and Italy lead their European neighbours in the number of home burglaries, a new study said. In Italy 1.39 million homes, or 70 per 1,000 burgled in 1993, followed by Britain with 1.48 million homes burgled, or 64 in every 1,000, according to figure compiled from 12 countries by Eagle Star Insurance. Norway had the best record with only two burglaries per 1,000 homes. The European average was 52 burglaries per 1,000 homes.

هكذا من الأحوال